VAMPIRELLA

A WARREN MAGAZINE

JAN. 1981 No. 93 $1.75 58885 6

THE WEB OF EVIL TIGHTENS...

UNDER THE MAGIC SPELL OF...

"THE COBRA GODDESS!"

VAMPIRELLA ILLUSTRATED EPIC ADVENTURE!

71658 58885 01

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

TAUNTAUN ACTION FIGURE

TAUNTAUN ACTION CREATURE The incredible snow creature from the ice planet Hoth that carries Han Solo on a dangerous mission across the icy wastes. An especially designed trap door on the Tauntaun's back allows for the insertion of your action figure. When the action figure is removed, the trap door closes. The Tauntaun stands on his hind legs which are movable as are his paws. This action figure is molded in detailed grey and brown plastic for that exotically furry appearance! #26231/$10.95

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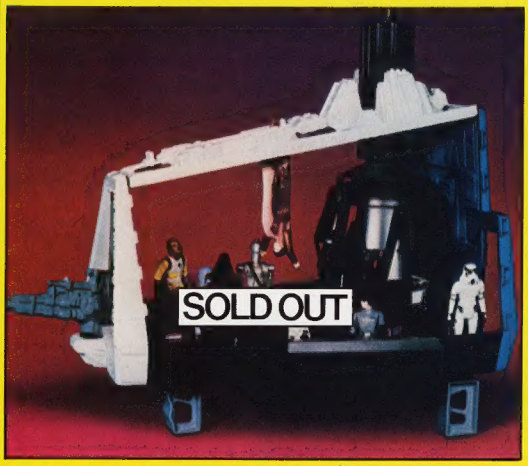

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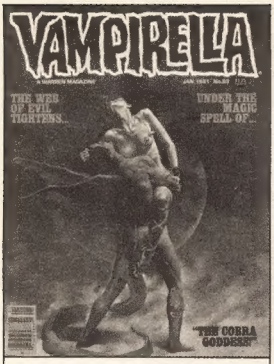

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VAMPIRELLA®

NUMBER 93 **JANUARY 1981**

VAMPI/APOCALYPSE 5

The mysterious international league of assassins, Apocalypse Inc, is at large and VAMPIRELLA already feels their awful presence! Her artificial blood serum has disappeared! She must have her serum back or face the all-consuming, all-deranging blood-lusting thirst that turns her into a wild animal! The thirst is almost upon her and the Drakulonian vampiress wings off into the night on a mission of revenge! No one can stop her and death is in the air!

ST. KNIGHT 25

All the great sages have spoken of other planes of existance beyond the ken of man! Cassandra St. Knight is one of the few who has been there! A psychic whose clear perception of the Astral Plane is so vivid, so unique that it is almost impossible to separate the realities that exist in all their multiplicity throughout the universe! Tonight Cassandra journeys to the Astral Plane with her young disciple to confront the dangers of the unknown beyond Earth!

PANTHA 33

The epic battle in the subways between an enormous panther and a mysterious wolf like creature had created a sensation in the daily press. Both gigantic creatures had disappeared into the subterreanian darkness! But the wolf, Anubis, was defeated and the panther, Drakulon's other Earthly inhabitant, Pantha, had reverted back to her human shape in order to elude the police! But still, there are too many questions that remain to be answered!

COBRA GODDESS 45

The dance of death had begun! Through the moonlit shadows of a Hindu temple, a giant cobra reared its sinuous form. Its glistening eyes spotted its victim. Its forked tongue flickered in anticipation. The cobra slithered over the stone balustrade and down the stairs. The victim stood stock still... too shocked, perhaps to move! Slowly but surely the cobra moved to entwine him in her coils! Why didn't they understand? This was nothing but love!

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Vampi's Scarlet Letters

I'm afraid that I haven't been as loyal a fan as I should have been. I missed **VAMPIRELLA** issues #85 through #89, and when I came back I found a new artist had taken the place of **Jose Gonzalez**.

The letters coming in about **Rudy Nebres'** efforts with **VAMPIRELLA** are a little disturbing. They are far too **negative**. This is so because all the fans are used to the style of **Gonzalez**, and I guess they are too conservative to imagine anyone else rendering **Vampi**. **Nebres** just needs a little time to hit his stride as the regular **Vampi** artist. I think he is an excellent artist and I wish him luck with his work. I don't think that **Warren Publishing** could have selected a better illustrator for the series!

VIN TRAPANI
Derby, Conn.

Now that **VAMPIRELLA** #89 is out, I know that #88 wasn't just a one time fluke. **Rudy Nebres'** accomplishment in "A Gathering of Wizards" is a worthy companion piece to his previous effort, "Night of the Hell Dream." I think that **Warren Publishing** has finally found the definitive **Vampi** artist.

I only found the last three pages in "Gathering" a bit disappointing, but that doesn't detract from the overall quality of the tale. Those pages simply lacked the detail that made all the other pages so entrancing.

Will Richardson's literary contribution was up to his usual high standards, although I felt the overly **loquacious** villain marred the effect that **Richardson** was trying to convey. Also, I'm afraid that one of **Vampi**'s chief attributes, her keen intellect, was given far too little play here. Surely, **Vampi** doesn't require hints from **Conrad Van Helsing** on how to extricate herself from a set of chains!

I suppose that the ending to the "Gathering of Wizards" will be argued about for months to come. I for one, have no objections to the split up of **Adam** and **Vampi** as long as it leads to new directions for the series. But, please, don't have **Vampi** moping around and whining a lot. She seems to be prone to that, and nobody likes a heroine that comes on like **Olive Oyl!**

As for the rest of the issue, when **Bruce Jones** lays an egg, he really lays an egg! The turkey I'm referring to is, of course, "Over the Edge." Too bad the story and art couldn't have been pushed off an edge somewhere! On the other hand, "Sight Unseen" was one of the best stories **Jones'** has ever done. I'm at a loss to explain such wildly differing levels of quality from the same writer.

BRIAN CADEN
Cincinnati, Oh.

What is **Warren Publishing** doing to **VAMPIRELLA**? **Vampi** is one of the most unique comics creations of all time! So, she deserves the best art available! The last couple of issues have been a real let down. I long for the masterful style of **Jose Gonzalez**. **Rudy Nebres** just doesn't measure up. I would even like to see **Gonzalo Mayo** render another **VAMPIRELLA** story, instead of having to put up with yet another **Nebres** hack job!

LEXY LUNG
Pearlbanks, Singapore

Issue #91 was fabulous! It showed that the great **Jose Gonzalez** was back, at long last, within the **Warren** fold! Oh, I know that the issue was merely another set of **reprints**! But at least it was a **spectacular** one!

JOHN BLACKWELL
Crest View, Mon.

I started collecting **VAMPIRELLA** with issue #85, so I thought that it was high time that the **Warren** editorial desk received a report from an ardent fan!

Issue #85's cover painting should have been on the cover of **Penthouse**! **Paul Gulacy**'s cover painting was nothing short of incredible. The art on the **VAMPIRELLA** story within, however, was deplorable. **Val Lakey** is a fantastic artist, but her style is definitely not suited for **Vampi**.

VAMPIRELLA #86 proved to be my favorite issue of the lot! "Revenge of the Renegade Wizard" was **up**, **down** and **outright** fantastic!

Issues #88 and #89 were fairly good, but there was nothing outstanding about them to merit any **special** attention by a fan.

VAMPIRELLA #90, however, was excellent! **Rudy Nebres** did a superlative artistic job, although the story could have been a bit more exciting.

But the best **VAMPIRELLA** of all was the one I have just finished! Issue #91 is without any doubt a landmark magazine. **Jose Gonzalez** is such an outstanding artist! I hope that **Gonzalez** once again becomes a regular artist for the **VAMPIRELLA** series. His women are lush, and his pages moody and detailed. He is a **master** of comic art!

NICHOLAS BARRACATO
Staten Island, N.Y.

Vampi's Scarlet Letters
C/O WARREN PUBLISHING
145 EAST 32nd STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016

Just when I thought that **Warren** was out to annoy the fans by pushing reprints at us forever, out comes issue #91. Five, yes count them, **five** new **VAMPIRELLA** stories by the legendary **Jose Gonzalez**!

Unfortunately, I'm aware that **Gonzalez** might not want to draw **Vampi** forever, so I hope **Warren** has tried to line up some new artists for the **VAMPIRELLA** series. Try experimenting with people like **Val Mayerik**, **Ramon Torrents** and **Russ Heath**.

I also think that the new **Pantha** series is a welcome addition to the **Warren** cast of characters.

NAPOLEON ZIVKOVIC
Patterson, N.J.

If you like Pantha, Napoleon, you're going to love Cassandra St. Knight. Her debut adventure begins in this issue!

I'm just writing to let you know that **VAMPIRELLA** still has a few English fans, despite the fact that the stories haven't been up to snuff in recent months. I must admit, though, that the art has been improving lately but please tell your artist, **Rudy Nebres**, to include **Vampi**'s birthmark in his renderings of our favorite Drakulonne.

By the way, you must be putting some thought into the 100th issue of **VAMPIRELLA**. I think it would be an excellent idea to present **awards** for all-time **best** work to appear on the **VAMPIRELLA** feature. This would include awards for the best art, and the best scripts ever. Also **Warren** could give an award for the best **VAMPIRELLA** cover. To make it **more** interesting, why not let the fans cast votes for their favorites?

GLEN PUGH
Little Boxwith, England

It sounds like a great idea, Glen. Below, you'll find the official ballot for VAMPIRELLA'S All-Time Greatest Awards! We hope all our loyal readers will select their favorite art, story and cover ever!

VAMPIRELLA'S AWARDS
for the All-Time...

Best Art _____

_____

Best Script _____

_____

Best Cover _____

_____

Look for the award winners in VAMPIRELLA # 100!

prologue

"AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, ***JEDEDIAH PAN*** ROAMED FREELY ACROSS THE SOUTHWEST...LEAVING A TRAIL OF UTTER HAVOC, ***CORPSES*** AND SPILLED ***BLOOD*** IN HIS WAKE."

HEY THERE, BOYS! ***WHAT*** CAN AH DO FOR YEW?

WE EES FROM ***CRUCIFIXION HILL*** AN' WE DON'T LIKE TH' WAY YUH ***TORE UP*** OUR TOWN!

YEAH, ***DEMON MAN***, WE'S CALLIN' YOU OUT!

*SEE ***EERIE*** 72, 74, 75 & 77.

"JEDEDIAH PAN WAS ***POSSESSED*** AND ***DRIVEN*** BY A CRUEL ANIMAL-LIKE URGE FOR ***REVENGE***!"

AH DON'T THINK YEW BOYS CAN ***COUNT*** VERY WELL! I GOTCHA ALL ***OUT-NUMBERED***!

YOU EES ***LOCO***, PAN! IT IS ***US*** WHO 'AS THE ***DROP*** ON YOU!

"***CRUCIFIXITION HILL***, A SMALL VILLAGE IN THE TERRITORY OF NEW MEXICO, WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ***DEATHS*** OF PAN'S BEAUTIFUL ***WIFE*** AND YOUNG ***DAUGHTER***!"

LOOK ***AGAIN*** AMIGOS!

BALAM!

BELIAL!

BELPHEGOR!

AT JEDEDIAH'S COMMAND THE GATES OF ***HELL*** SWING WIDE, AND ***SIX*** OF SATAN'S MOST FEARED ***SERVANTS*** SLIP THROUGH!

"PAN HELD THE SMALL TOWN UNDER A PERSONAL REIGN OF TERROR UNTIL HE MET HIS LONG LOST SON, ***JEREMIAH COLD***, THERE."

ASMODEUS!

AHRIMAN!

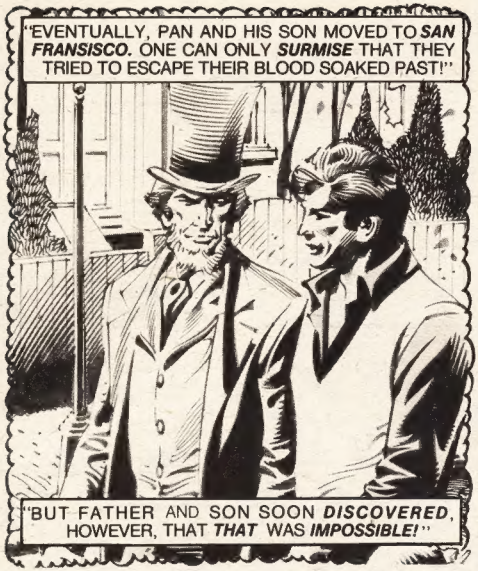
ASTEROTH!

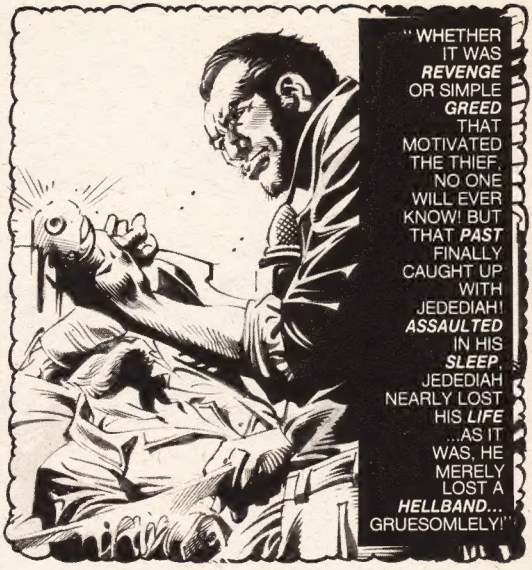
"AFTER AN EMOTIONAL ***RE-UNION*** WITH HIS SON, THE ELDER PAN ***MELLOWED*** AND USED HIS DEMON SUMMONING ***HELLBANDS*** IN SELF-DEFENSE ***ONLY***!"

VAMPIRELLA

MOST PEOPLE WHO CROSSED HIS PATH NEVER KNEW HOW HE EARNED HIS NICKNAME, ***DEMON MAN***. UNLESS, OF COURSE, THEY ***CROSSED*** HIM AND BY THEM IT WAS FAR TOO ***LATE***!

Author: **RICH MARGOPOULOS**/Illustrator: **RUDY NEBRES**


"EVENTUALLY, PAN AND HIS SON MOVED TO *SAN FRANSISCO.* ONE CAN ONLY *SURMISE* THAT THEY TRIED TO ESCAPE THEIR BLOOD SOAKED PAST!"
"BUT FATHER AND SON SOON *DISCOVERED*, HOWEVER, THAT *THAT* WAS *IMPOSSIBLE!*"


"WHETHER IT WAS *REVENGE* OR SIMPLE *GREED* THAT MOTIVATED THE THIEF, NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW! BUT THAT *PAST* FINALLY CAUGHT UP WITH JEDEDIAH! *ASSAULTED* IN HIS *SLEEP*, JEDEDIAH NEARLY LOST HIS *LIFE* ...AS IT WAS, HE MERELY LOST A *HELLBAND...* GRUESOMLELY!"

"ALTHOUGH JEDEDIAH'S *SON* ATTEMPTED TO SETTLE THE SCORE..."

"...IT WAS THE *FATHER* WHO ULTIMATELY *WROUGHT* THE FULL MEASURE OF *REVENGE*!"

"WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT, NO ONE REALLY KNOWS."
"HOWEVER, MOST AUTHORITIES OF THE OCCULT AGREE THAT A *ROGUE PRIEST* CAME INTO OWNERSHIP OF THE ACCURSED ARMBANDS!"

AFTER THAT, *PAN'S* MYSTERIOUS WRISTBANDS SEEM TO HAVE *VANISHED* FROM MORTAL SIGHT!

WHEN THE PRIEST FINALLY *DIED*, HIS FEW *POSSESSIONS* WERE SOLD. THE *BRACELET* AMONG THEM.
BUT THEIR TRUE *QUALITIES* REMAINED UNKNOWN TO *EACH* NEW OWNER DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS!
GOLLY...!
WHY ALL THE COLLECTIVE *DOUR* COUNTENANCES ON SUCH A NOTABLE ASSEMBLAGE? MIGHT I INFER THAT SOMETHING IS SORELY AMISS?
PEN! YOUR'RE BACK!
APOCALYPSE INC.

THE PROPERTY OUTSIDE IS SWARMING WITH MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL CONSTABULARY!
I DEPART FOR A MERE WEEKEND AT A MAGICIANS CONVENTION IN PERTH AMBOY...
...AND ALL HELL SEEMINGLY BREAK LOOSE IN MY TRANSIENT ABSENSE!
AND WHO, MIGHT I INQUIRE IS THIS FETCHING LASS?
PERHAPS YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME...
...BUT I'M CRYSSIE COLLINS, VAMPI'S NEW ROOMMATE!
AH, YES! YOU WERE THE INNOCENT VICTIM WE SPIRITED AWAY FROM THE INFAMOUS COUNCIL OF WIZARDS!*
IT GRATIFIES ME TO SEE THAT YOU'VE MADE A COMPLETE RECOVERY!
THAT'S JUST IT, MR. PENDRAGON! I DON'T THINK I'M CURED AT ALL!
WHAT...?!
*SEE VAMPIRELLA #73
CRYS IS STILL PLAGUED BY DEMONS, PEN... BUT NOT IN THE USUAL FORM OF POSSESSION!
IN FACT, JUST LAST NIGHT SHE REVERTED TO A SCALED DEMONESS BEFORE MY VERY EYES!
YEAH, BUT NEITHER VAMP OR ME KNOWS WHY!
I WAS KIND OF HOPING THAT DR. VAN HELSING COULD FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON!
I HAVE MANY IDEAS TO OFFER CONCERNING YOUR SITUATION, DEAR GIRL...

AH, OFFICER! MAY ONE OF US BE OF ASSISTANCE?
UH, MISS VAMPIRELLA?

WE'RE SENDING SWILLMAN'S BODY TO THE COUNTY MORGUE!
IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE WE CAN DO BEFORE WE GO?
NO! NOT A THING! YOU'VE ALL DONE A SPLENDID JOB!

UH, YOU KNOW, I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW SWILLMAN AND HIS ASSOCIATES DID ALL THIS DAMAGE!
ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU CAN'T IDENTIFY ANY OF THE OTHERS WHO WERE WITH HIM?

NO! IT WAS SO DARK! I...I COULDN'T GET A GOOD LOOK AT THEM!
WELL, THEY WON'T BE AT LARGE FOR LONG! IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE WE TRACK THEM DOWN!

WHICH IS EXACTLY WHAT I'M AFRAID OF!
GOODBYE OFFICER...AND AGAIN, THANKS FOR EVERYTHING?

OKAY CONRAD, HE'S GONE! NOW WHAT WAS THAT YOU SAID ABOUT TENTATIVE EXPLANATIONS?
FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME, WHEN SWILLMAN INVOKED ASTEROTH, IT CAUSED CRYSSIE TO BECOME A DEMONESS INSTEAD!
THERE OBVIOUSLY MUST BE A CONNECTION OR LINK!

"NOW, IT IS KNOWN THAT IN THE HAZY, MISTY PAST, WHEN MANKIND FIRST CAME TO BE, A GREAT MOTHER GODDESS WAS WORSHIPPED!"
"SHE WAS THE GODDESS OF FERTILITY...OF THE SPRINGTIME PLANTING...OF HOPE AND RENEWAL...OF BIRTH AND REBIRTH!"
"SHE WAS CALLED ISHTAR IN MESOPOTAMIA, AND KNOWN AS ASHTART OR ASHERAH BY THE PHOENICIANS AND THE CANAANITES!"
"AS TIME PROGRESSED, HER NAME CONTINUED TO EVOLVE AND CHANGE ...BUT SO DID HER NATURE. GRADUALLY SHE TURNED INTO A FEARSOME DIETY WHOSE APPETITE FOR HUMAN SACRIFICE WAS INSATIABLE!
"THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT DENOUNCED HER WORSHIP AND CURSED HER UNDER THE NAME OF ASTEROTH! THE ONCE BENEVOLENT GODDESS HAD WILLFULLY DEGENERATED INTO A DEMONESS IN LEAGUE WITH THE DARKEST POWERS OF HELL!"

"IN MY OPINION, THE ORIGINAL DEMON THAT POSSESSED CRYSSIE WAS ASTEROTH HERSELF!
"WHEN SWILLMAN SUMMONED ASTEROTH, THE DEMONESS WAS NOT EVOKED AS A SPIRIT REQUIRING A HOST-BODY AS IN THE CLASSICAL CASES OF POSSESSION...BUT RATHER SHE MANIFESTED HERSELF DIRECTLY INTO THE PHYSICAL PLANE OF EXISTENCE!"
"HOWEVER, A HELL CURSED RAPPORT HAD ALREADY BEEN ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE FALLEN GODDESS AND CRYSSIE DURING THEIR EARLIER ENCOUNTER WITH THE COUNCIL OF WIZARDS!"
"SWILLMAN'S SUMMONS INEXORABLY DREW ASTEROTH TO CRYSSIE AND THEIR BODIES MERGED..."
WHAP!
"...BUT NOT THEIR MINDS! HELL-SPAWN AND HUMAN FUSED INTO AN ENTIRELY NEW BEING... A DEMONIC SYNTHESIS ONE BEING DOMINANT OVER THE OTHER!"

THEN, THAT EXPLAINS WHY I SEEMED TO BE IN CONTROL OF THINGS WHEN I FOUGHT WITH SWILLMAN!
EVEN THOUGH I FELT SO HORRIBLY EVIL!
EXACTLY, CHILD!

IT SEEMS THAT THE HELLBAND ACTS AS SOME KIND OF OF REGULATOR THAT CONTROLS THE MERGING OF THE DEMONESS WITH YOUR BODY!
SINCE YOU'VE RECENTLY BEEN EXPOSED TO SATANIC FORCES, I FEAR THAT YOU MAY RUN THE RISK OF REPOSSESSION SHOULD YOU EVER DISCARD IT!

GEE! I'VE GOT TO PUT UP WITH DEMONS AS LONG AS I WEAR IT, AND IF I DON'T I CAN KISS GOODBYE TO WHAT'S LEFT OF MY SANITY!
NOT MUCH OF A CHOICE IS IT?

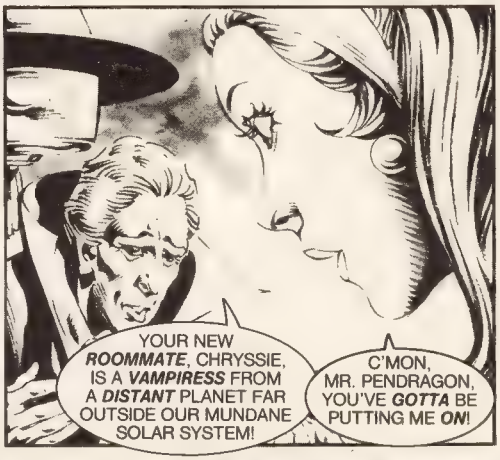
I'M SORRY, MY DEAR! I SWEAR I'LL DO MY BEST TO LIBERATE YOU FROM THIS BONDAGE!
BUT UNTIL THEN, I FEAR YOU MUST ACCEPT THIS UNEARTHLY BURDEN!

I'LL TAKE THE SECOND ARMBAND CONRAD...
...THE ONE THAT CONTROLS BELPHAGOR, BELIAL AND BELAM! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS TO LEAVE LYING AROUND!

IT'LL BE SECURE IN MY LOCKED WALL SAFE WITH MY...
OH, NO NO!
V-VAMPI... WHAT...WHAT IS IT?

M-MY BLOOD SERUM SUBSTITUTE...
...IT... IT'S GONE!
WHAAAAT?!

B-BLOOD SERUM? I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
CONSIDERING THAT YOU WOULD SOONER OR LATER LEARN THE TRUTH, WE MAY AS WELL CONFIDE IN YOU!

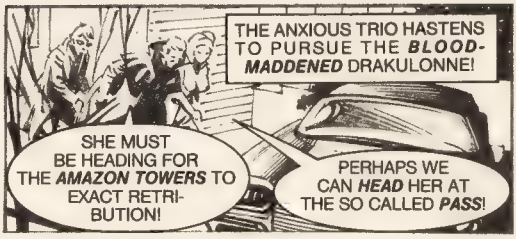

YOUR NEW ROOMMATE, CHRYSSIE, IS A VAMPIRESS FROM A DISTANT PLANET FAR OUTSIDE OUR MUNDANE SOLAR SYSTEM!
C'MON, MR. PENDRAGON, YOU'VE GOTTA BE PUTTING ME ON!

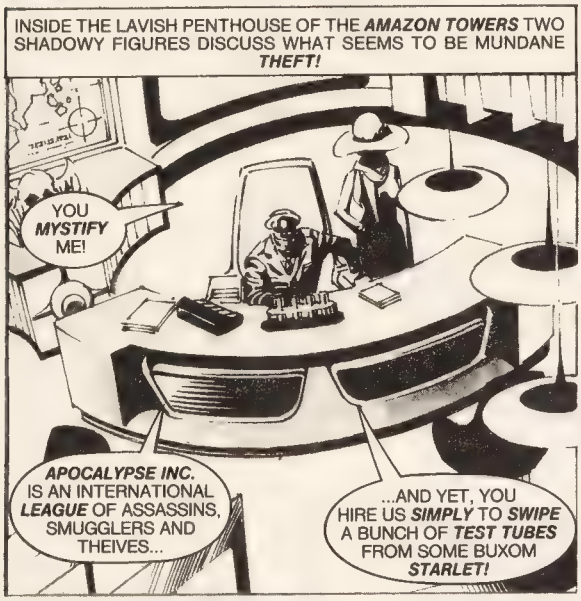
I'M AFRAID NOT, CHILD!
THE DNA IN VAMPIRELLA'S ALIEN GENES HAS SPECIFICALLY EVOLVED TO SURVIVE ON HEMOGLOBIN WHICH WAS AS COMMON ON DRAKULON AS WATER IS ON EARTH!

PEN! CONRAD! THIS IS NO TIME TO DISCUSS MY HERITAGE! THERE ARE MORE PRESSING MATTERS!
...SUCH AS WHO STOLE MY SERUM...AND WHY!

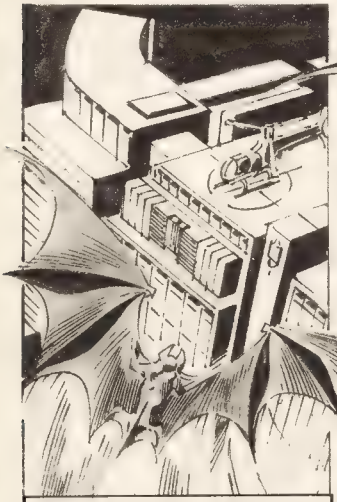
APOCALYPSE INC.
IN RESPONSE TO VAMPIRELLA'S URGENT QUESTIONS, CONRAD CONCENTRATES HIS MIND'S EYE ON THE PSYCHIC VISIONS FLOODING IN UPON HIM!
I SEE...A BUILDING..THE NEW AMAZON TOWERS! DANGER EMANATES FROM ITS UPPER FLOORS!
AND...YES! I SEE A PLAQUE BEARING THE INSCRIPTION OF APOCALYPSE, INC.!
GREAT! SOME MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANY'S MADE OFF WITH MY SERUM!
WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE WE DO ABOUT IT?
ALL I CAN SUGGEST, VAMPIRELLA, IS RESTRAINING YOU AS A SAFEGUARD FROM YOUR IMPENDING THIRST!
MEANWHILE, PENDRAGON AND I WILL ATTEMPT TO CONCOCT A FRESH SUPPLY OF PLASMA IN YOUR BASEMENT LABORATORY!
WHAT!? MANACLE ME LIKE AN ANIMAL... WHILE THE GUILTY PARTY GOES FREE?
NO, NEVER!
IN A SEETHING FURY, VAMPIRELLA METAMORPHOSES INTO A BAT AND WINGS OFF IN TO T
I WANT THE BLOOD SERUM THAT WAS TAKEN FROM ME!
I WANT TO HAVE IT BACK!
V-VAMPIRELLA ...WAIT!
AND HAVE IT BACK I WILL!

I FEAR THAT THE *BLOOD-LUST* IS UPON HER...SHE'S A *HUNTRESS* NOW!
WE-E *CAN'T* JUST LET HER *TAKE OFF*, WE'VE GOT TO *HELP* HER!


THE ANXIOUS TRIO HASTENS TO PURSUE THE *BLOOD-MADDENED* DRAKULONNE!
SHE MUST BE HEADING FOR THE *AMAZON TOWERS* TO EXACT RETRI-BUTION!
PERHAPS WE CAN *HEAD* HER AT THE SO CALLED *PASS*!


INSIDE THE LAVISH PENTHOUSE OF THE *AMAZON TOWERS* TWO SHADOWY FIGURES DISCUSS WHAT SEEMS TO BE MUNDANE *THEFT!*
YOU *MYSTIFY* ME!
APOCALYPSE INC. IS AN INTERNATIONAL *LEAGUE* OF ASSASSINS, SMUGGLERS AND THEIVES...
...AND YET, YOU HIRE US *SIMPLY* TO *SWIPE* A BUNCH OF *TEST TUBES* FROM SOME BUXOM *STARLET!*

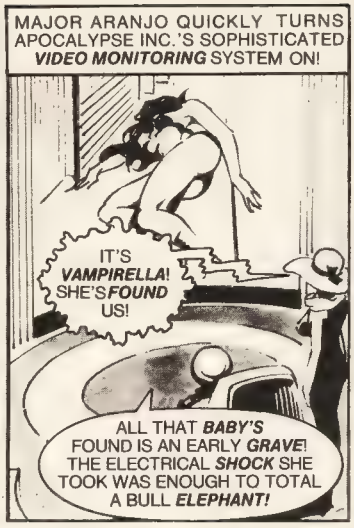
AND JUST WHAT IS THIS *STUFF* ANYWAY? *GOD*! IT LOOKS LIKE *BLOOD*!
IT REQUIRED ALL OF MY *HUSBAND*'S OLD CONTACTS JUST TO *FIND* YOUR ORGANIZATION!
AND MY *REASONS* ARE NONE OF YOUR *BUSINESS*! BUT I *ASSURE* YOU THAT THIS WILL SIGN THAT STARLETS *DEATH* WARRANT!


AS THIS SINISTER CONVERSATION PROCEEDS, VAMPIRELLA *SWOOPS* OUT OF THE NIGHT...

...TO ALIGHT UPON A *PERCIPITOUS* LEDGE HIGH ABOVE THE STREET...ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT THE *FORTIFIED* WINDOW IS...

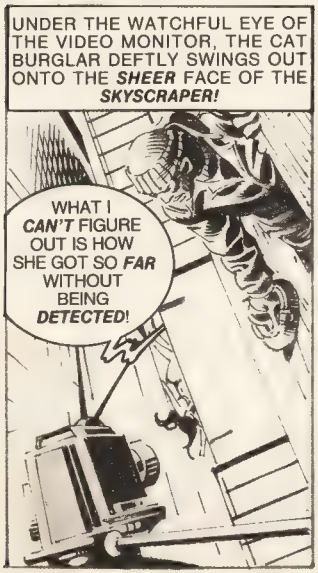
ZZZT!
...*ELECTRIFIED!*

BRRRRRRRRRING!
WHAT--? THAT'S THE EXTERNAL ALARM! SOMEONE IS TRYING TO GET IN!
SUDDENLY, BRAIN PIERCING ALARMS BEGIN TO SCREAM THROUGHOUT THE PENTHOUSE COMPLEX OF APOCALYPSE INC.!


MAJOR ARANJO QUICKLY TURNS APOCALYPSE INC.'S SOPHISTICATED VIDEO MONITORING SYSTEM ON!
IT'S VAMPIRELLA! SHE'S FOUND US!
ALL THAT BABY'S FOUND IS AN EARLY GRAVE! THE ELECTRICAL SHOCK SHE TOOK WAS ENOUGH TO TOTAL A BULL ELEPHANT!

INSTANTLY THE MAJOR SUMMONS ONE OF APOCALYPSE'S MOST RENOWNED EMPLOYEES ...THE CAT BURGLAR!
CAT! THERE'S A SOUTHERN FRIED STARLET ON THE EAST LEDGE! RETRIEVE HER BODY AND DISPOSE OF IT!
YOU GOT IT! MAJOR, SIR!

I DIDN'T MEAN FOR HER TO DIE LIKE THAT! I WANTED HER TO SUFFER THE WAY SHE MADE ME SUFFER!
I FAIL TO SEE ANY DIFFERENCE!
AFTER ALL, A CORPSE BY ANY OTHER NAME IS JUST AS DEAD!

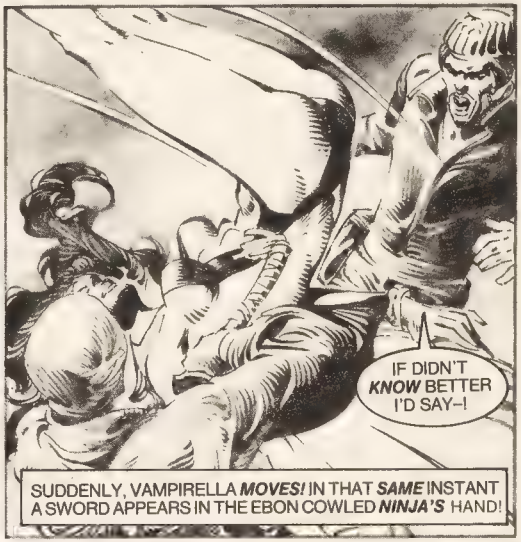

UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF THE VIDEO MONITOR, THE CAT BURGLAR DEFTLY SWINGS OUT ONTO THE SHEER FACE OF THE SKYSCRAPER!
WHAT I CAN'T FIGURE OUT IS HOW SHE GOT SO FAR WITHOUT BEING DETECTED!

WITH ALL THE GRACE OF A SPIDER DESCENDING UPON A FLY, THE CAT BURGLAR...
UNLESS, OF COURSE, SHE FLEW!

...CAPTURES HIS NEWEST VICTIM!
YEAH! THAT'S IT! THAT BABY MUST'VE USED A HANG GLIDER...TACTICS AFTER MY OWN HEART!

VAMPIRELLA IS QUICKLY DELIVERED TO THE *EXPERIMENTAL* MEDICAL SECTION OF APOCALYPSE INC.!
I DUNNO, *NINJA!*
WHO HAVE YOU *THERE*, MOST ESTEEMED CAT BURGLAR?
THE BOSS ORDERED ME TO PULL HER OFF HIS OFFICE *LEDGE!*

A *SHAME* IS IT NOT, CAT, THAT ONE SO *BEAUTEOUS* SHOULD BE CUT DOWN!
YOU SAID IT MAN! IT'S KINDA *HARD* HARD TO BELIEVE SHE'S BEEN *JUICED!*


IF DIDN'T *KNOW* BETTER I'D SAY–!
SUDDENLY, VAMPIRELLA *MOVES!* IN THAT *SAME* INSTANT A SWORD APPEARS IN THE EBON COWLED *NINJA'S* HAND!

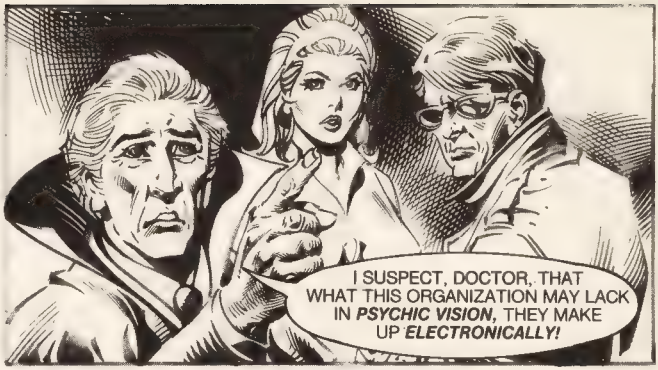
BUT VAMPIRELLA'S *ALIEN* REFLEXES, DRIVEN BY A RAVENING *THIRST*, PROVES FASTER THAN THE FLASHING *BLADE* OF STEEL!
HER FANGS *RIP* INTO THE WARRIOR'S NECK PIERCING THE NINJA'S THROBBING *JUGULAR!*

THEN DRAINS HIM *DRY!*

IT CAN'T BE! YOU'RE *DEAD!*
FOOL! A VOLTAGE THAT WOULD *KILL* A HUMAN WOULD ONLY *STUN* ME!

WELL *BITCH*, THIS CAT'S GOT *COLLAPSIBLE* CLAWS...
...AND YOU WON'T TAKE ME BY *SURPRISE!*
YOU WON'T GET PAST MY RAZOR SHARP *GRAPNEL HOOK!*
WHOOM
THINK *AGAIN* LITTLE MAN!
GAAAA!
WITH THE *INSTINCTS* OF A DEMENTED BEAST, VAMPIRELLA'S *FANGS* FIND THEIR MARK... *AGAIN!*
THE DOOR'S *LOCKED!*
HER BLOOD LUSTING HUNGER MONENTARILY *SATED*, SHE SET OUT TO FIND OF HER PRECIOUS *ARTIFICIAL* BLOOD SERUM!
BUT *NOT* FOR LONG!
CRASH!
THE HUNTRESS FROM THE STARS *INADVERTANTLY* BURSTS INTO THE SOUND-PROOFED LOUNGE FILLED WITH CUT-THROAT *ASSASSINS* RECRUITED FROM EVERY RACE, NATION, CASTE AND CLASS THE *WORLD* OVER!
MEIN GOTT!
THET *FILLY* TAIN'T ONE 'A US!
AH SO, HONORABLE ASSOCIATE! YOU ARE *CORRECT!*
IN *ALLAH*'S SACRED NAME... *ATTACK!*

AFTER A FRANTIC RACE ACROSS TOWN, A WORRIED TRIO ENTERS THE LOBBY OF A LARGE SKYSCRAPER!
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE PLACE, DR. VAN HELSING?
YES, MY DEAR! I HAVE AN OVERWELMING PREMONITION OF EVIL FROM DIRECTLY ABOVE!


I SUSPECT, DOCTOR, THAT WHAT THIS ORGANIZATION MAY LACK IN PSYCHIC VISION, THEY MAKE UP ELECTRONICALLY!

AT THAT VERY MOMENT IN A PENTHOUSE COMPLEX HIGH ABOVE THE STREET!
WE HAVE VISITORS DOWN IN THE LOBBY!
THAT COULD BE TROUBLE!
YOU MUST MAKE SURE VAMPIRELLA IS DEAD! NOW!

ONCE AGAIN THE MAJOR RESORTS TO THE SOPHISTICATED ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS OF APOCALYPSE INC.!
RIGHT NOW I'VE GOT TO ELIMINATE THOSE TROUBLE MAKING VISITORS!

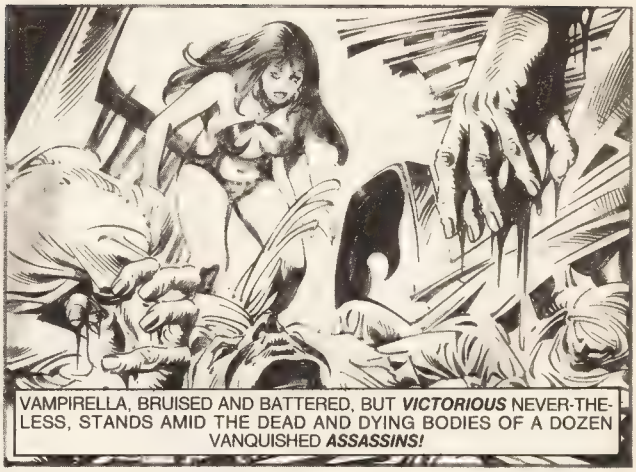
O'SHANE, WE'VE GOT VISITORS OUT FRONT! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO!
YE NEEDN'T WORRY, MAJOR! THEY'RE GOOD AS DEAD!

THE LIEUTENANT IS AN EXPERT... THE BEST! WHEN HE'S NOT DOING DEMOLITION WORK FOR OUR COMPANY...
...HE'S BLOWING UP NORTHERN IRELAND! THEY DON'T CALL HIM THE MAD BOMBER OF BELFAST FOR NOTHING!

MEANWHILE THE ELEVATOR DOORS WHISPER APART AND AN UNLIKELY THREESOME STEPS INTO THE RECEPTION AREA OF APOCALYPS INC.... ONLY TO FIND THE ROOM...!
IT'S EMPTY!
THUNK!
AND INFINATELY WORSE, AN IRON PORTCULLIS HAS DROPPED BEHIND US, EFFECTIVELY CUTTING OFF ANY RETREAT!
I'M LT. KEVIN O'SHANE!
AN' WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOIN' HERE, NOW?
MY GOD! HE'A GOING TO THROW A GRENADE!
A-AH-AHRIMAN!
STOP HIM!
WITH AN ALMOST REFLEXIVE REACTION, CHRYSSIE COLLINS SUMMONS FORTH ONE OF THE DEMONS CONTROLED BY HER HELLBAND!
SAINTS PRESERVE ME!
I SENSE VAMPIRELLA! THIS WAY ...HURRY!
G-GOSH! I CONJURED A DEMON AND KILLED A MAN WITHOUT EVEN THINKING!
HAVE I CHANGED, OR IS ASTEROTH ACTING THROUGH ME?

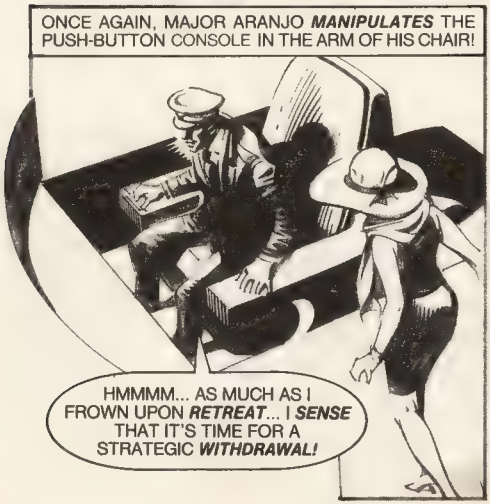
LIKE A STIRRED UP NEST OF ***HORNETS***, THE FANATICAL LEAGUE OF ASSASSINS ***SWARMS*** AROUND THE FIGHTING MAD FORM OF THE UNEARTHLY ***DRAKULONNE!***
WITH LITHE ARMS AND LEGS ***FLASHING***, SHE DEFENDS HERSELF WITH AGILE AND FLUID MOVEMENTS... PITTING HER ***EXTRATERRESTRIAL*** REFLEXES AND HER INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF DRAKULONIAN BATTLE TECHNIQUES AGAINST AN ***ELITE*** SQUAD OF EARTHBORN ***DEATHMASTERS!***

IN *LESS* THAN A MINUTE ...IT IS *OVER!*


VAMPIRELLA, BRUISED AND BATTERED, BUT *VICTORIOUS* NEVER-THE-LESS, STANDS AMID THE DEAD AND DYING BODIES OF A DOZEN VANQUISHED *ASSASSINS!*

AND IN THE *RENEGADE* MAJOR'S COMMAND CENTER, A DOOR IS SUDDENLY FLUNG *WIDE*...
YOU!
YOU!

...MERE MOMENTS BEFORE VAMPIRELLA *EXPLODES* INTO THE ROOM!
WHERE'S MY *SERUM?* WHY HAVE YOU *DONE* THIS TO ME?
I WANT ANSWERS *NOW!*


ONCE AGAIN, MAJOR ARANJO *MANIPULATES* THE PUSH-BUTTON CONSOLE IN THE ARM OF HIS CHAIR!
HMMMM... AS MUCH AS I FROWN UPON *RETREAT*... I *SENSE* THAT IT'S TIME FOR A STRATEGIC *WITHDRAWAL!*

I DON'T KNOW *HOW* YOU MANAGED TO SURVIVE MY MEN AND DEATH TRAPS *VAMPIRELLA*...
...BUT THE *NEXT* TIME WE MEET, YOUR LIFE WON'T BE WORTH A PLUGGED *NICKEL!*
WAIT! I PAID YOU TO *STOP* HER! DON'T LEAVE ME, DAMN YOU! *KILL HER!*

NEARLY INSTANTANEOUSLY, THE MAJOR DISAPPEARS THROUGH A ***TRAP DOOR*** BENEATH HIS DESK, LEAVING VAMAPIRELLA TO VENT HER RAGE BY THE ***ONLY*** MEANS SHE KNOWS HOW!

VAMPIRELLA! NO...PLEASE DON'T!

YOU WANT MY ***LIFE?*** TAKE IT... IF YOU ***CAN!***

COME ***BACK*** HERE!

BUT VAMPIRELLA IS PAST HEARING AS SHE ***HARVEST*** HER ***REVENGE***...

VAMPIRELLA!

NO NOOO... YIIIEEE!

...IN ***BLOOD!***

ONLY AS THE FLOOD OF ***CRIMSON*** SLACKENS DOES VAMPIRELLA'S FURY ***EBB!***

DEAR HEAVEN, ***VAMP!*** DON'T!

YOU'RE ***KILLING*** MY DAUGHTER ***SARA GRANVILLE!***

FATHER, I HAD TO ***DO*** IT! SHE ***MURDERED*** MY HUSBAND AND SON!*

I HAD TO MAKE HER ***PAY*** BUT WHY SO YOU ***LOVE*** AND ***PROTECT*** HER...WHEN SHE CAUSES SO MUCH PAIN?

AHHHH!

*SEE VAMPIRELLA #25!

PEN, I...

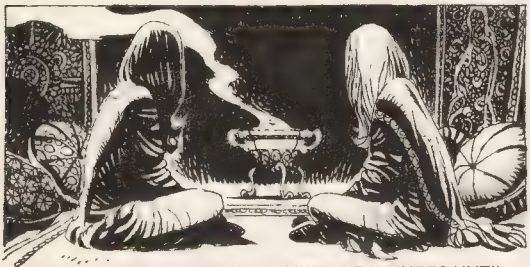
THERE'S NO NEED TO SAY ANYTHING! SHE WAS TOO ***EMBITTERED*** TO FORGIVE!

IN THE END IT WAS HER BLIND ***HATRED*** THAT DESTROYED HER!

TEARS FILL VAMPIRELLA'S ***EYES*** BECAUSE SHE ***KNOWS*** THAT ***SARA GRANVILLE'S*** DYING WORDS WILL ***HAUNT*** HER FOR THE REST OF HER GUILT RIDDEN ***LIFE!***

end

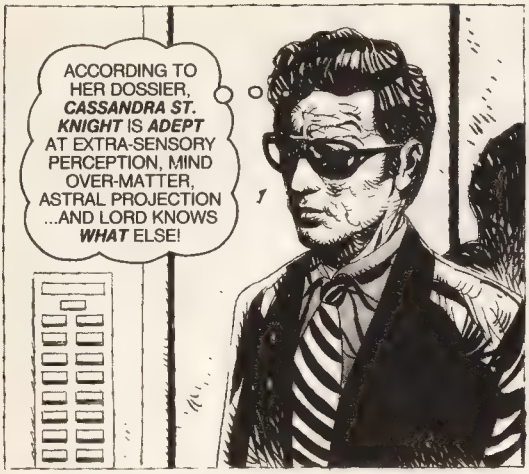
Author: **RICH MARGOPOULOS**/Illustrator: **RUDY NEBRES**



THE TWO MEDITATE FOR INTERMINABLE MINUTES UNTIL THEY ARE BOTH IN A STATE OF DEEP TRANCE.

THEN, SLOWLY, LIKE GHOSTLY SPECTRES, THEIR CONSCIOUSNESS...THEIR ASTRAL FORMS LEAVE THEIR BODIES!

SUDDENLY, BEFORE THEM, A SPRAWLING CITY, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL EITHER HAS EVER BEFORE SEEN, APPEARS ALMOST MYSTICALLY! THEY FLOAT GENTLY THROUGH THE COSMIC VOID, HOVERING ABOVE THE PEACEABLE REALM, BASKING IN ITS TOTAL SERENITY!
OH, CAS, LOOK! IT...IT'S A GOLDEN CITY ON A SILVER CLOUD! IT'S BEAUTIFUL!
A TRUE PSYCHIC REQUIRES IRON DETERMINATION AND DISCIPLINE, CHILD! CONCENTRATE, TAROT! CONCENTRATE UPON THE CITY! DO NOT ALLOW YOUR ATTENTION TO WANDER FROM THE SPIRITUAL REALITY AT HAND!
THE PSYCHIC ASSAULT


ACCORDING TO HER DOSSIER, CASSANDRA ST. KNIGHT IS ADEPT AT EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION, MIND OVER-MATTER, ASTRAL PROJECTION ...AND LORD KNOWS WHAT ELSE!

SHE'D BE ONE HELL OF AN ASSET TO PROJECT DANTE ...PROVIDING SHE'S NOT JUST ANOTHER FAKE!
THIS IS CASSANDRA ST. KNIGHT'S PENTHOUSE SUITE?

I'M SPECIAL AGENT BENJAMIN DARK! C.I.A.! I'M HERE TO SEE MS. ST. KNIGHT! SHE'S EXPECTING ME!
HEY! DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT I SAID, FRIEND?
SAY SOMETHING, DAMN IT!

CALM DOWN, MR. DARK! NADIR'S A MUTE! HE'S SANDY'S BODYGUARD!
I'M HARRY PITMAN. HER MANAGER!
AND I'M THRILLED!

SPEAKING OF THE LITTLE, LADY WHERE IS SHE?
UH...I THINK I'LL WAIT!
SANDRA'S IN HER PRIVATE QUARTERS, MEDITATING! NO ONE BOTHERS HER THERE...
...UNLESS, OF COURSE, THEY WANT TO RUN INTERFERENCE WITH NADIR!
SO I CAN SEE! EXCUSE ME...BUT MS. ST. KNIGHT FORBIDS SMOKING!
IT DISTURBS THE AURIC VIBRATIONS!

OH CAS, THIS PLACE IS SO...SO HEAVENLY!
AN APT DESCRIPTION, TAROT! MORE SO THAN YOU REALIZE!

"WHEN INDIVIDUALS DIE...THEIR SOULS REEMERGE UPON ONE OF THE MANY ASTRAL REALMS WHERE THEY REAP THE GOOD KARMA THEY'VE SOWN!"

"HERE THEY EXIST IN CONTENTED BLISS BEFORE EVENTUALLY INCARNATING BACK IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD..."

...COMPLETING YET ANOTHER REVOLUTION IN THE NEAR-ENDLESS CYCLE OF KARMA AND REINCARNATION KNOWN AS THE AWAGAWAN...THE WHEEL OF LIFE!
BUT WHAT LIES BEYOND THE WHEEL OF DEATH AND REBIRTH?

THE HIGHER REALMS ARE COMPOSED OF LIGHT AND DIVINE SOUND...THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES!
I CANNOT DESCRIBE THEM WITH MERE WORDS SINCE THEY TRANSCEND HUMAN LANGUAGE!

THEN THE ASTRAL PLANE FUNCTIONS AS HEAVEN IN THE OVER-ALL SPIRITUAL SCHEME OF THINGS!
IF THAT'S THE CASE THEN, WHAT ABOUT HELL?

TAROT! ON THIS PLANE YOUR VERY THOUGHTS ARE REALITY! SHIFT YOUR ATTENTION BACK TO THE POSITIVE POLARITY! QUICKLY!
SHIVA HELP US! IT'S TOO LATE!
OH... MY... GOD!

WITH THE RAPIDITY OF *THOUGHT*, THE PEACEFUL ASTRAL PLANE SHIMMERS AND *FADES*. AND IN ITS PLACE EMERGES A DARK, SINISTER WORLD OF MALEVOLENT *PHANTOMS* AND SHRIEKING FORMS, WRACKED BY THE TORMENT OF LOST, EVIL LIFETIMES.
TAROT'S MIND, WITH A MERE THOUGHT, HAS TRANSPORTED US TO THE *LIMBO ZONE* OF *PUNISHMENT* ...IN ONE OF THE LOWER ASTRAL PLANES!
THIS IS... *HELL* ITSELF!
OH, CAS! *H-HELP ME*! WHAT HAVE I *DONE*?

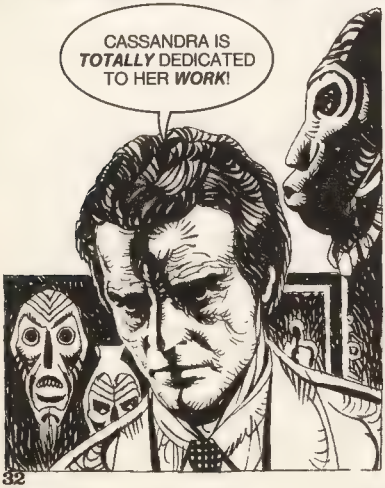
YET, EVEN AS HER ASTRAL PRESENCE FACES THE SINISTER *UNKNOWN*, CASSANDRA'S *IMAGE* SITS OPPOSITE TELEVISION TALK SHOW HOST *MERV DENVER!*
AND YOU CLAIM YOU'RE GOING TO *ACCOMPLISH* THIS FEAT BY SHEER *WILLPOWER ALONE*, CASSANDRA?
THAT'S RIGHT, MERV!
THIS'LL EITHER GARNER US THE BEST *RATINGS* IN THIS SHOW'S *HISTORY*...OR *I'LL* END UP IN *JAIL*, MS. ST. KNIGHT...AND *YOU'LL* BE IN THE *MORGUE*!
OKAY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... THIS IS *IT*! HER HELPER, IF YOU CAN CALL HIM *THAT*, IS *DRAWING* BACK A ONE HUNDRED POUND *BOW*...
...RELEASING THE *RAZOR-SHARP* HUNTING ARROW!
OH MY GOD! SHE'S *DONE* IT! SHE'S ACTUALLY *DONE* IT!
TWANG!
CASSANDRA ST. KNIGHT HAS *SHATTERED* THE ARROW WITH THE DESTRUCTIVE POWER OF HER *MIND*!
ISN'T SHE WONDERFUL? *CASSANDRA ST. KNIGHT*... THE GREATEST *MENTALIST* IN THE WORLD!
KLAP! CLAP! KLAP! KLAP! CLAP!
THAT'S *HER*, MR. DARK! WHAT DO YOU *THINK*?

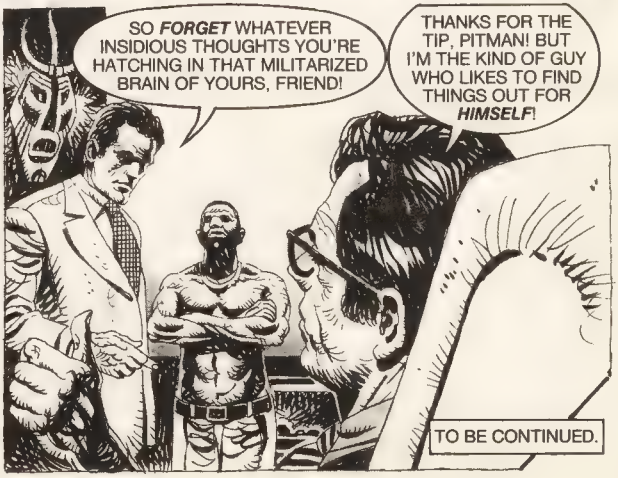
I'LL SAY ONE THING FOR YOUR EMPLOYER, MR. PITMAN...SHE MAKES A PLAYBOY FOLDOUT LOOK ANEMIC!

LET ME GIVE YOU SOME ADVICE, DARK! SANDRA'S OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE!

"SOME OF THE WEALTHIEST, MOST IN-FLUENTIAL MEN IN THE WORLD HAVE TRIED TO WIN HER!

"IT ENDS UP THE SAME EVERY TIME! THEY CAN'T GET TO FIRST BASE!"
WHY DO YOU SPURN MY AFFECTION, CASSANDRA?
I CAN'T GIVE MY LOVE TO ANYONE, COUNT!

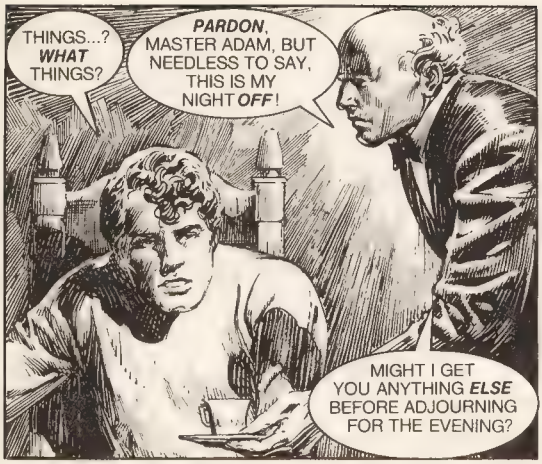

CASSANDRA IS TOTALLY DEDICATED TO HER WORK!

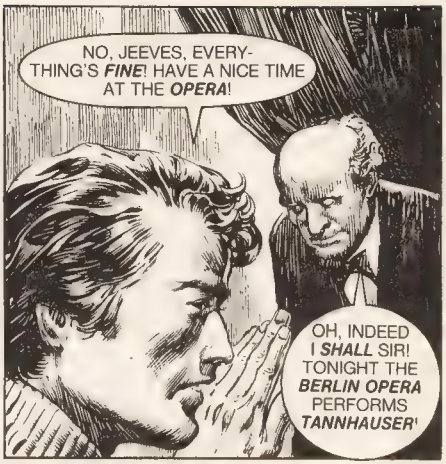

SO FORGET WHATEVER INSIDIOUS THOUGHTS YOU'RE HATCHING IN THAT MILITARIZED BRAIN OF YOURS, FRIEND!
THANKS FOR THE TIP, PITMAN! BUT I'M THE KIND OF GUY WHO LIKES TO FIND THINGS OUT FOR HIMSELF!
TO BE CONTINUED.

PANTHA

ENCORE FOR ANUBIS

Author: **RICH MARGOPOULOS**/Illustrator: **LEO DURANONA** and **ALFREDO ALCALA**


THINGS...? WHAT THINGS?
PARDON, MASTER ADAM, BUT NEEDLESS TO SAY, THIS IS MY NIGHT OFF!
MIGHT I GET YOU ANYTHING ELSE BEFORE ADJOURNING FOR THE EVENING?


NO, JEEVES, EVERYTHING'S FINE! HAVE A NICE TIME AT THE OPERA!
OH, INDEED I SHALL SIR! TONIGHT THE BERLIN OPERA PERFORMS TANNHAUSER!

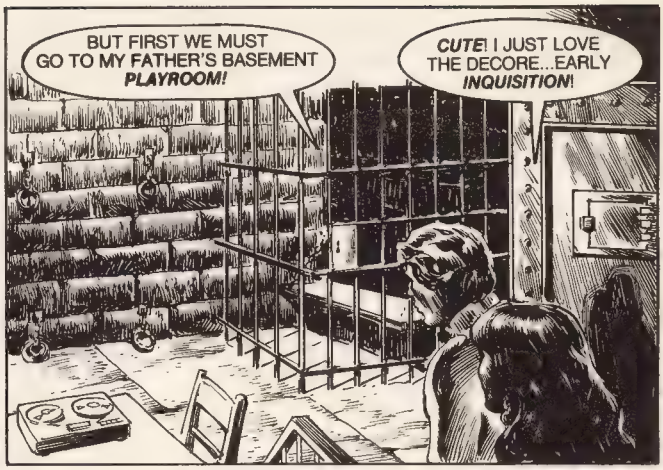
NOW, PANTHA, IS THERE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO GET OFF YOUR CHEST?
YEAH...

...WHY DID THAT LEFT-OVER LUPITE WANT TO DO ME IN? AND, DID BOWSER'S RACE REALLY WIPE OUT THE PANTHER PEOPLE OF THE PLANET DRAKULON?
FURTHER... WHAT IS HIS CONNECTION WITH MY EGYPTIAN ANCESTRY?

WHOA! THERE'S AN EASY ENOUGH WAY TO FIND OUT... ASK HIM!
ADAM! THIS IS NO JOKE! FOR ONCE I'M BEING COMPLETELY SERIOUS!

SO AM I, PANTH! IT'S AN IDEA I'VE BEEN TOYING WITH ALL DAY!

THE AMULET BEARS BOTH THE *PERSONA* AND *MEMORY* OF YOUR LUPITE, SO IF I PUT IT ON WE MAY *LEARN* SOMETHING!
ADAM *REMOVES* THE PENDANT FROM THE WALL SAFE.


BUT FIRST WE MUST GO TO MY FATHER'S BASEMENT *PLAYROOM!*
CUTE! I JUST LOVE THE DECORE...EARLY *INQUISITION*!

DAD HAD THIS PLACE BUILT *YEARS* AGO...
...ON THE OFF CHANCE HE EVER CAPTURED *VAMP*!

FORTUNATELY, HE'S *CHANGED* HIS MIND SINCE THEN, AND THIS PLACE HAS BEEN GATHERING DUST EVER *SINCE*!

IT'S THE *ONLY* PLACE WHERE WE CAN QUESTION THE ALIEN LIFE-FORCE *SAFELY*! MANACLE MY WRISTS SECURELY, PANTH.
ADAM! THIS'S TOO *RISKY!* I DON'T LIKE IT ONE BIT!

I KNOW HOW *IMPORTANT* DISCOVERING YOUR PAST IS TO YOU...AND *DAD'LL* APPRECIATE A MORE COMPLETE HISTORY OF *DRAKULON*!

JUST LOWER THAT *AMULET* AROUND MY NECK!

THEN, WE'LL PLAY *TWENTY QUESTIONS*!

WON'T WE...?

...*DRAKULONIAN WEAKLING!*

SO, YOU HAVE RETURNED ME TO THE RANKS OF THE *LIVING*! YOU ARE EITHER VERY *BRAVE* OR A *FOOL*!
AND *YOU*, LIKE ALL WOULD BE WORLD BEATERS, ARE ALL *MOUTH!*

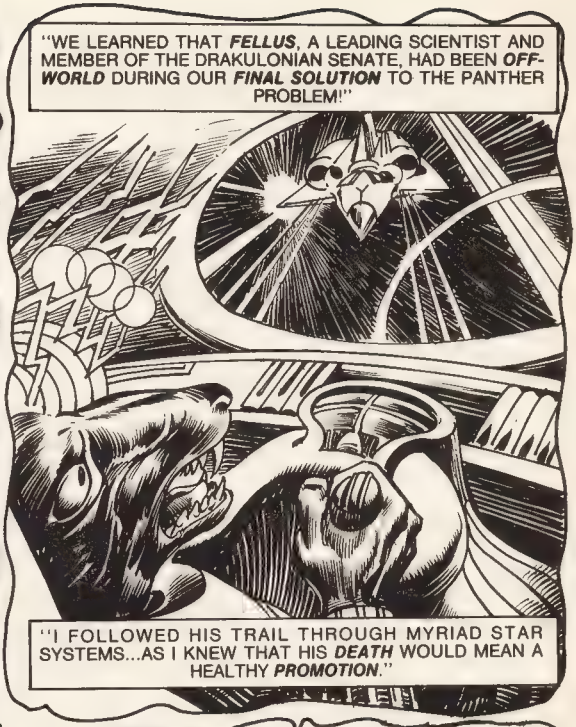
IF YOU WEREN'T IN *ADAM'S BODY*, I'D *SCRATCH* YOUR EYES OUT! NOW *LISTEN* TO ME, CREEP!

I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT A *NOVA* KILLED OFF THE PANTHER PEOPLE OF THE PLANET DRAKULON, BUT YOU CLAIM THAT *YOUR RACE* GETS THE *CREDIT*!
NOW, WHICH IS *RIGHT*!

BOTH!

CUT THE BULL!
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MY *ANCESTRY?*

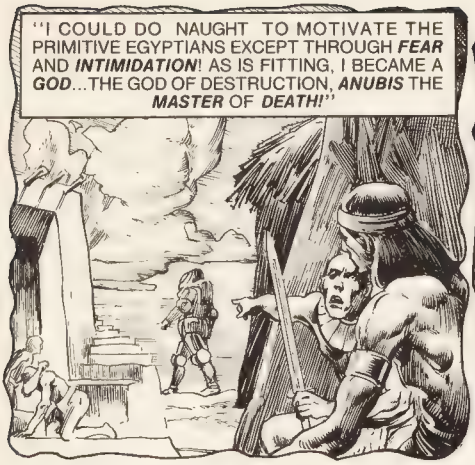
"AFTER MY WORLD, ***LUPAE***, TRIUMPHED OVER DRAKULON...I WAS ASSIGNED TO ***TRACK DOWN*** ANY AND ALL SURVIVORS!"


"WE LEARNED THAT ***FELLUS***, A LEADING SCIENTIST AND MEMBER OF THE DRAKULONIAN SENATE, HAD BEEN ***OFF-WORLD*** DURING OUR ***FINAL SOLUTION*** TO THE PANTHER PROBLEM!"
"I FOLLOWED HIS TRAIL THROUGH MYRIAD STAR SYSTEMS...AS I KNEW THAT HIS ***DEATH*** WOULD MEAN A HEALTHY ***PROMOTION***."

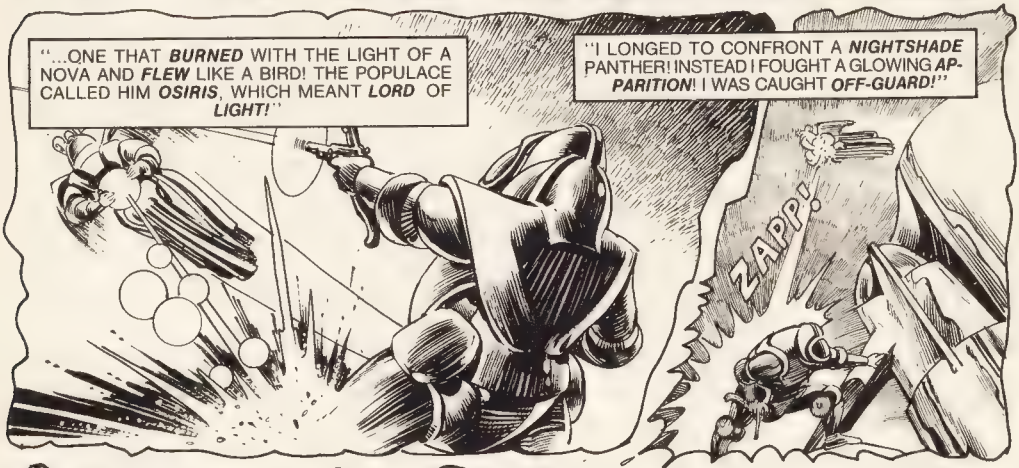
"WE FINALLY MET AND ***BATTLED*** IN SPACE ABOVE THIS WORLD. EVEN THOUGH HIS CRAFT SUSTAINED HEAVY ***DAMAGE***, HE MANAGED TO ELUDE ME AND CRASH ON THIS...***EARTH***!"

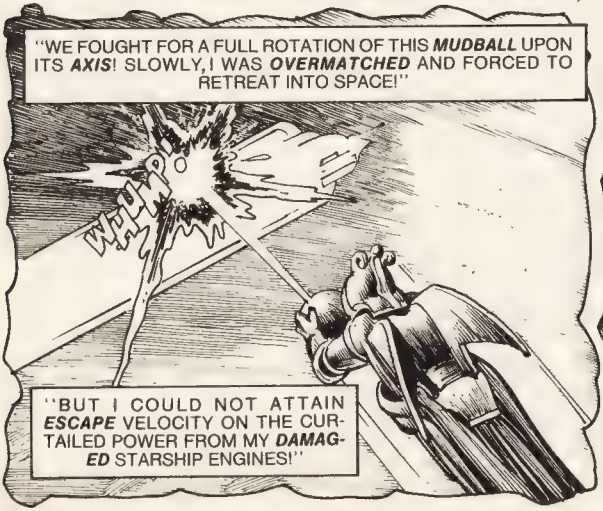
"IT TOOK ME MANY LONG WEEKS TO ***PICK UP*** HIS TRAIL AGAIN...BUT BY THEN IT WAS FAR TOO LATE!"
"FELLUS HAD ALREADY ENDEARED HIMSELF TO THE LOCAL CHIEFTAIN, THE ***PHAROAH KHUFU***, AND HAD EARNED HIS TITLE, ***KHAFRA*** ...THE HEALER."

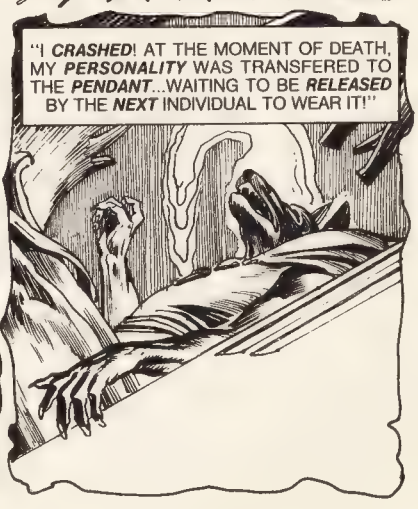
"ALTHOUGH I ***SLEW*** MANY OF THE NATIVES IN MY ***WRATH***, THEY STILL REMAINED LOYAL TO THEIR ***PHAROAH*** AND WOULD NOT REVEAL THE DRAKULONIAN'S ***IDENTITY***."


"I COULD DO NAUGHT TO MOTIVATE THE PRIMITIVE EGYPTIANS EXCEPT THROUGH ***FEAR*** AND ***INTIMIDATION***! AS IS FITTING, I BECAME A ***GOD***...THE GOD OF DESTRUCTION, ***ANUBIS*** THE ***MASTER*** OF ***DEATH!***"

"LITTLE DID I REALIZE THAT ***FELLUS*** WAS PREPARING TO MEET ME! WITH SALVAGED MATERIAL FROM HIS SUNKEN CRAFT HE WROUGHT A ***MODIFIED SPACESUIT***..."

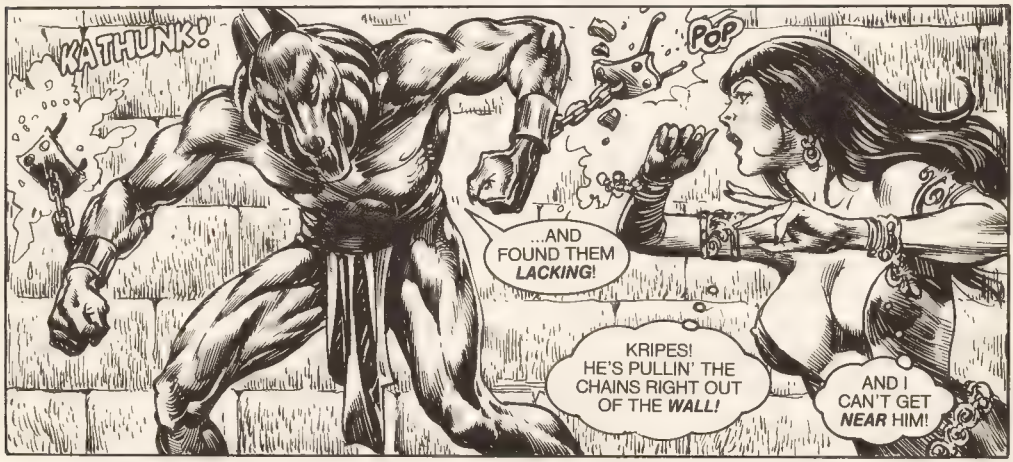

"...ONE THAT ***BURNED*** WITH THE LIGHT OF A NOVA AND ***FLEW*** LIKE A BIRD! THE POPULACE CALLED HIM ***OSIRIS***, WHICH MEANT ***LORD*** OF ***LIGHT!***"
"I LONGED TO CONFRONT A ***NIGHTSHADE*** PANTHER! INSTEAD I FOUGHT A GLOWING ***APPARITION***! I WAS CAUGHT ***OFF-GUARD!***"
ZAPP!


"WE FOUGHT FOR A FULL ROTATION OF THIS ***MUDBALL*** UPON ITS ***AXIS***! SLOWLY, I WAS ***OVERMATCHED*** AND FORCED TO RETREAT INTO SPACE!"
WHUP
"BUT I COULD NOT ATTAIN ***ESCAPE*** VELOCITY ON THE CURTAILED POWER FROM MY ***DAMAGED*** STARSHIP ENGINES!"


"I ***CRASHED***! AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH, MY ***PERSONALITY*** WAS TRANSFERED TO THE ***PENDANT***...WAITING TO BE ***RELEASED*** BY THE ***NEXT*** INDIVIDUAL TO WEAR IT!"

BUT YOU STILL DO *NOT* UNDERSTAND DO YOU?
UH... UNDERSTAND *WHAT*?

THAT I WAS SIMPLY *DIVERTING* YOU WITH THE TALE YOU SO DESPERATELY HUNGER FOR...
...AS I *TESTED* MY CHAINS...


KATHUNK!
POP
...AND FOUND THEM *LACKING*!
KRIPES! HE'S PULLIN' THE CHAINS RIGHT OUT OF THE *WALL!*
AND I CAN'T GET *NEAR* HIM!

GOOD GOD! THAT LUPITE'S STUCK IN *ADAM*'S BODY! HOW CAN I *STOP* HIM AND *NOT* HURT ADAM AT THE SAME TIME?

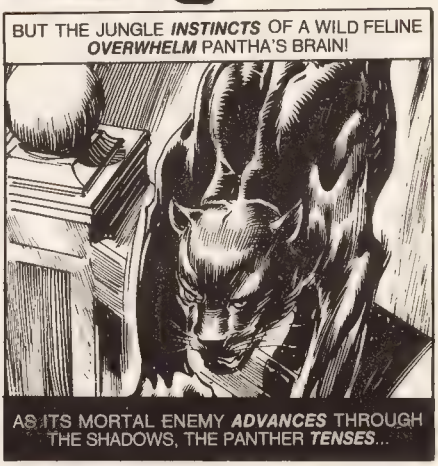
AT LEAST, I KNOW THE LAY OUT OF THIS PAD, AND RIN TIN TIN HERE *DOESN'T*!

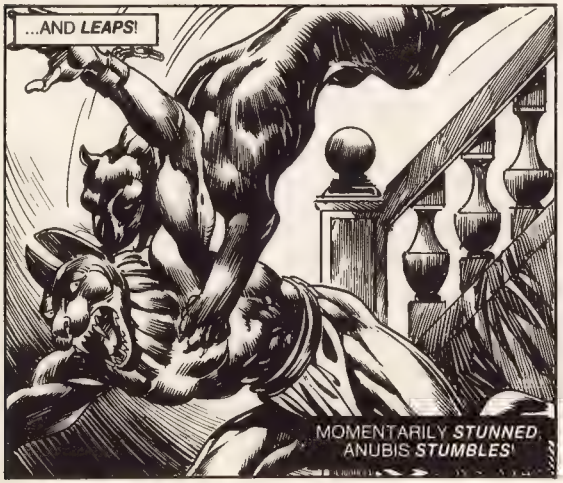
CHANCES ARE THAT I CAN *SEE* BETTER IN THE DARK THAN OLE *FUR-FACE*! SO, I'LL PULL OUT ALL THE *FUSES*!

DARKNESS SMOTHERS VAN HELSING MANOR AS PANTHA FRANTICALLY TRANSFORM FROM HER HUMAN FORM INTO THE LITHE DEADLY FIGURE OF A DRAKULONNE KILLER CAT...!
THE SHADOWS WILL PROTECT ME FROM THAT ALIEN HORROR!

PANTHA FLITS LIKE A BLACK WRAITH THROUGH THE VAN HELSING MANSION. URGENTLY, SHE WRACKS HER BRAIN FOR A SUCCESSFUL STRATAGEM!
JUST GOTTA FIND SOMEWAY TO STOP THIS CLOWN!

RELENTLESSLY, THE LUPITE TRACKS HER DOWN, FOLLOWING THE PANTHER SCENT ON EVERY STRAY BREEZE!


BUT THE JUNGLE INSTINCTS OF A WILD FELINE OVERWHELM PANTHA'S BRAIN!
AS ITS MORTAL ENEMY ADVANCES THROUGH THE SHADOWS, THE PANTHER TENSES...


...AND LEAPS!
MOMENTARILY STUNNED, ANUBIS STUMBLES!

NOW, MAYBE I CAN GET THAT PENDANT!

WITH *INHUMAN* STRENGTH, ANUBIS TWISTS OUT FROM UNDER THE *LITHESOME* PANTHA TO *CLUTCH* AT HER GRAPPLING FORM!

MY *GOD*! HE'S *CHOKING* ME!
I'D BETTER *SWITCH* BACK TO MY *CAT* SHAPE!

ANUBIS' DEADLY GRIP IS SUDDENLY SHAKEN BY THE *MATERIALIZATION* OF FURIOUSLY SLASHING *TALONS* AND BITING *FANGS*!

BUT EVEN THE RAGING FURY OF A FULL-GROWN PANTHER IS *NOT* ENOUGH TO STOP THE *MAD* LUPITE!

THE ONLY THING THAT PANTHA CAN *WIN* IS ANOTHER *MOMENT* OF *FREEDOM*!
GOD, THAT BEAST IS IN *ADAM'S BODY*, I HOPE I DIDN'T *DAMAGE* IT TOO MUCH!

WITH THE STRENGTH OF *INSANE* HATE, THE LUPITE REBOUNDS, *CLOSING* IN ON PANTHA ONCE AGAIN!
THINK, DAMMIT, THERE'S *GOT* TO BE A WAY *OUT*!

CONRAD VAN HELSING'S TROPHY ROOM! MAYBE I CAN HIDE IN *THERE* WHILE I FIGURE OUT A WAY TO GET THAT *NECKLACE* FROM ANUBIS!

ALL ADAM DID WAS TAKE IT *OFF* HIM THE LAST TIME WE FOUGHT!
I DOUBT THAT HE'LL *PART* WITH IT SO *EASILY THIS* TIME!
PANTHA *SHIFTS* BACK TO A MORE *HUMAN* SHAPE.

WHERE ARE YOU, WITCH? THIS DWELLING *REEKS* WITH YOUR STENCH!
IT *CONFUSES* MY HUNTING *SENSES*!
PANTHA GRABS A HEAVY, SOLID GOLD *CANDLE HOLDER* AND LIFTS IT HIGH OVER HER HEAD!

KRAK!
GOOD! THAT'S *EXACTLY* WHAT I WANTED TO HEAR!

UNNGH!
NOW! I'LL *SNATCH* THE PENDANT BEFORE HE CAN–!

WOOPS! HE WAS *WAITING* FOR THAT...
THE...THE BLOW TO HIS HEAD DIDN'T EVEN *PHASE* HIM!

VAMP! AND I HAVE GOTTEN OUT OF TIGHTER SPOTS THAN THIS!
VAMP!! THAT'S IT! SHE USES DRAKULONIAN HYPNOSIS! MAYBE I CAN TOO!
I'M AS GOOD AS DEAD IF I DON'T TRY IT!

ADAM! LISTEN TO ME! FIGHT THIS THING...FOR ME AND YOURSELF! I KNOW YOU CAN, LOVER! CLAW YOUR WAY TO THE SURFACE!
FIGHT IT!

FIGHT IT!
NO...DON'T!

STOP!

I... I--!

PANTH!

I'M BACK!

I...WE...DID IT! I COULD HEAR YOU CALLING ME AS IF FROM A VAST DISTANCE!
IT GAVE ME THE STRENGTH TO THROW OFF THE POWER OF THE AMULET...BUT HOW DID YOU DO IT?

EITHER IT WAS DRAKULONIAN HYPNOSIS, OR MY UNDERRATED ACTING ABILITY!
OR, MAYBE IT WAS JUST PLAIN OL' LOVE!

LATER THAT EVENING!
OUCH! I STILL ACHE ALL OVER! I FEEL AS IF I'VE BEEN THROUGH WORLD WAR II!
AT LEAST, I HAVE THE LUXURY OF HAVING PANTH PATCH ME UP! MAYBE SHE'LL TUCK ME IN FOR THE NIGHT!

ADAM...CAN I COME IN?
SURE, PANTH! BUT WHY? IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG?

YEAH! IT'S AWFULLY LONELY IN THAT STUFFY OLD GUEST ROOM! I NEED SOMEONE WARM TO CUDDLE WITH!
YOU DO, HUH? PERHAPS I CAN BE OF SERVICE!
UMM...YOU'LL DO JUST FINE!

YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME FOR THIS, BUT DO YOU REMEMBER THE TAPE RECORDER?
WELL, I FORGOT TO TURN IT ON! NOT A DAMN THING THAT LUPITE SAID WAS TAPED!

IT'S NOT IMPORTANT! I'VE GOT OTHER THINGS TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT NOW, LIKE...TURNING OFF THESE LIGHTS!

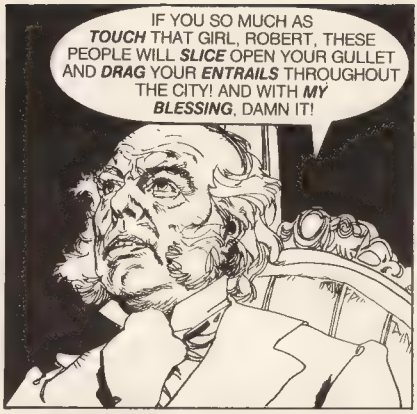
WE'RE MORE ALIKE THAN YOU THINK! ADAM!
PANTH, BABY...I'VE GOT THIS FUNNY FEELING–!
MMMMMMMMMM!
end

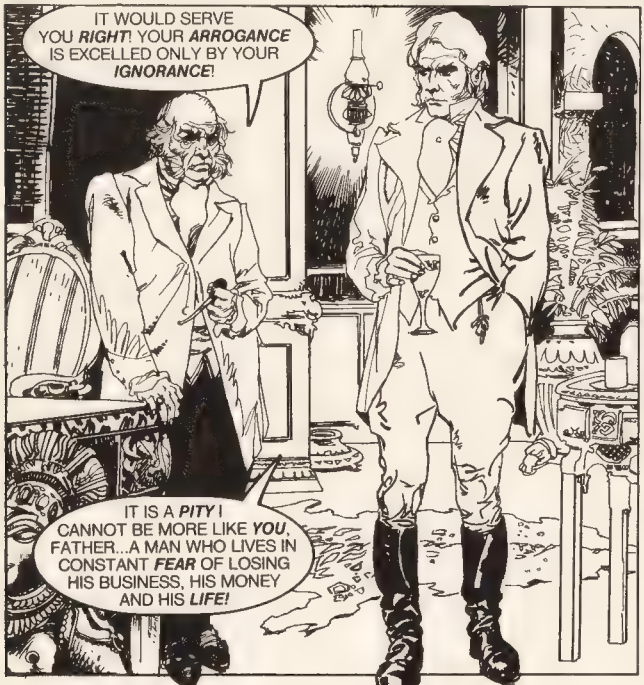
INDIA IN THE LATTER HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY WAS A LAND OF STRANGE, ALLURING ***MYSTERIES***, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE CIVILIZED SUBJECTS OF THE BRITISH CROWN WHO FOUND THEMSELVES TRANSPLANTED INTO THE MIDST OF ***CALCUTTA'S*** BACKWARDS MASSES! IT WAS A TIME OF ***DANGER***, OF ***EXPLOITATION*** AND ***DEATH***, AND OF ANCIENT ***CURSES*** OF WHICH NO CIVILIZED MAN COULD CONCEIVE!

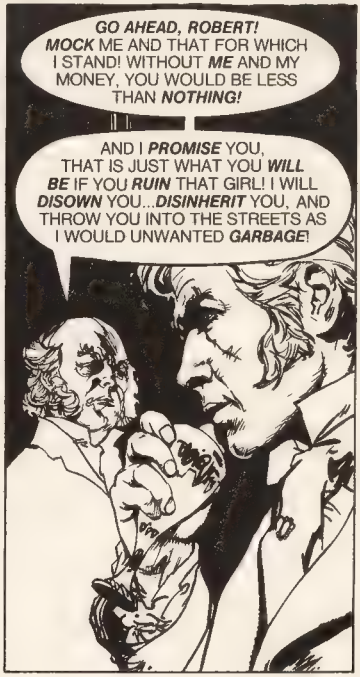
COBRA GODDESS

Author and Illustrator: **ESTEBAN MAROTO**

TO ME SHE IS NOTHING MORE THAN A GIRL...TO BE USED AS ALL GIRLS, FATHER! DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE TOO OLD TO REMEMBER WHAT A HEALTHY MAN DOES WITH A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN!?


IF YOU SO MUCH AS TOUCH THAT GIRL, ROBERT, THESE PEOPLE WILL SLICE OPEN YOUR GULLET AND DRAG YOUR ENTRAILS THROUGHOUT THE CITY! AND WITH MY BLESSING, DAMN IT!


IT WOULD SERVE YOU RIGHT! YOUR ARROGANCE IS EXCELLED ONLY BY YOUR IGNORANCE!
IT IS A PITY I CANNOT BE MORE LIKE YOU, FATHER...A MAN WHO LIVES IN CONSTANT FEAR OF LOSING HIS BUSINESS, HIS MONEY AND HIS LIFE!

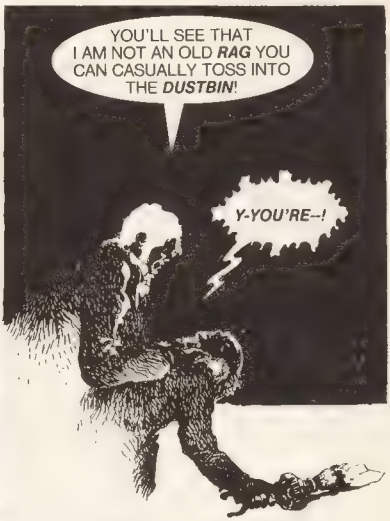

GO AHEAD, ROBERT! MOCK ME AND THAT FOR WHICH I STAND! WITHOUT ME AND MY MONEY, YOU WOULD BE LESS THAN NOTHING!
AND I PROMISE YOU, THAT IS JUST WHAT YOU WILL BE IF YOU RUIN THAT GIRL! I WILL DISOWN YOU...DISINHERIT YOU, AND THROW YOU INTO THE STREETS AS I WOULD UNWANTED GARBAGE!

YOU POMPOUS OLD FOOL!
DO YOU FULLY EXPECT ME TO STAND IDLY BY AND TAKE THESE THREATS FROM YOU?

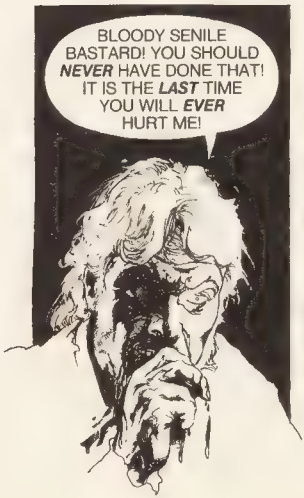
I'D SOONER SEE YOU IN *HELL*!
WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*? LET ME *GO*!

NOBODY WILL STAND BETWEEN *ME* AND THE WOMEN I *DESIRE*! DO YOU *HEAR*?
COBRA GODDESS OR NOT, SHE IS *MINE* TO DO WITH AS I *PLEASE*!
R-ROBERT ...*N-NO!*

AND AS FOR YOUR THREAT TO *DISINHERIT* ME...YOU HAD BETTER DO IT *QUICKLY*, YOU PONDEROUS OLD FOOL! I UNDERSTAND IT IS *HIDEOUSLY* DIFFICULT FOR A *DEAD MAN* TO ALTER HIS *WILL*!
YOU... YOU'RE *KILLING* ME!


YOU'LL SEE THAT I AM NOT AN OLD *RAG* YOU CAN CASUALLY TOSS INTO THE *DUSTBIN*!
Y-YOU'RE--!

CRASH!


BLOODY SENILE BASTARD! YOU SHOULD *NEVER* HAVE DONE THAT! IT IS THE *LAST* TIME YOU WILL *EVER* HURT ME!

R-ROBERT...NOOOO! DON'T! YOU...DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING! YOU...YOU'RE MAD!

NO, FATHER! NEVER HAVE I BEEN SO CLEAR-HEADED! I SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS YEARS AGO! AT LAST I WILL BE FREE OF YOUR PURITANICAL TYRANNY!
R-ROBERT... PLEASE!!

ALL INIDA IS ASLEEP! THERE IS NO ONE TO HEAR YOU, FATHER! EVERYONE WILL BELIEVE IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
ROOOOOOBERT!

GOODBYE, FATHER! I'LL SEE YOU IN HELL!
NOOOOOOO

PITY! IT LOOKS AS THOUGH I'VE SUDDENLY BECOME AN ORPHAN!
THUD

CALM DOWN, ROBERT, OLD SPORT! YOU'RE *TREMBLING* LIKE THE WIND! IT'S *OVER* NOW! THE OLD SKINFLINT IS *GONE*!

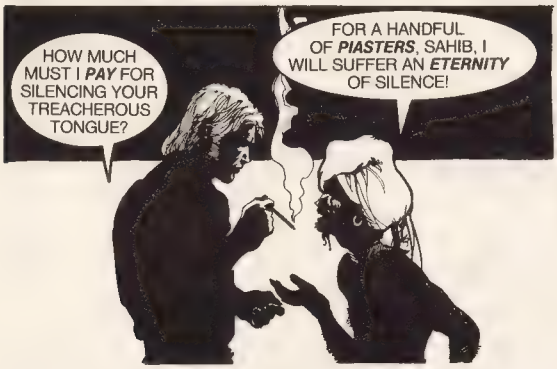
THE FIRST THING I'VE GOT TO DO IS *CLEAN* THIS BLOODY *MESS*...CLEAN UP *MYSELF*, AND MAKE THE ENTIRE AFFAIR APPEARS AS AN *ACCIDENT*!

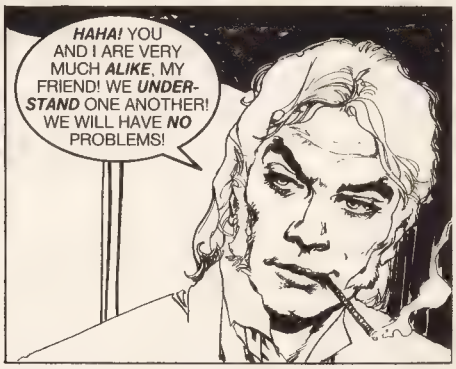
IF I AM *CLEVER* ENOUGH I CAN MAKE THE AUTHORITIES BELIEVE THAT THE FEEBLE-MINDED OLD NINNY *FELL* FROM THE WINDOW!
THERE ARE *THOUSANDS* OF ACCIDENTS IN CALCUTTA EVERY DAY!

NOBODY HAS SEEN *ANYTHING* TO PROVE *OTHERWISE*!
THAT IS NOT *SO*, SAHIB! *I* HAVE SEEN *EVERYTHING!*

Y-YOU!? WHO THE DEVIL ARE YOU? WHERE DID YOU COME FROM, YOU MISERABLE WRETCH?
FROM THE NIGHT, SAHIB! I HAVE COME FROM THE NIGHT!
I AM BUT A HUMBLE GUST OF WIND WHICH BLOWS IN YOUR FAVOR! I HAVE BEEN SENT BY THE GODS OF THE NIGHT TO HELP YOU!
ALL RIGHT! WHAT'S YOUR GAME, YOU FILTHY LITTLE WORM?
WHAT IS THE WIND'S GAME WHEN IT BLOWS? STEP TO THE WINDOW, SAHIB! OBSERVE!
THE BODY! IT'S GONE!
I HAVE EYES THAT SEE, EARS WHICH HEAR AND A MOUTH THAT SPEAKS, SAHIB! YET, I SHALL NOT SPEAK OF ANY OF THIS!
THE NIGHT AND I SHALL REMAIN SILENT! THE NIGHT AND I ARE YOUR FRIENDS!

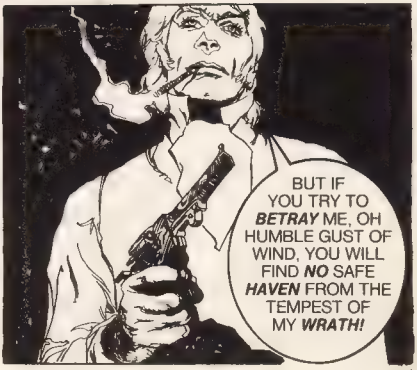
YOU ARE COWERING LIKE A RABID CUR! YET, YOUR MIND IS THAT OF A CUNNING FOX! WHAT'S IN THIS FOR YOU?
I AM A MAN OF LITTLE MEANS, SAHIB! I HAVE NOTHING! I MERELY FIND THINGS BY THE WAYSIDE! TONIGHT, WITHOUT MEANING, I FOUND A BODY UNDER A WINDOW!

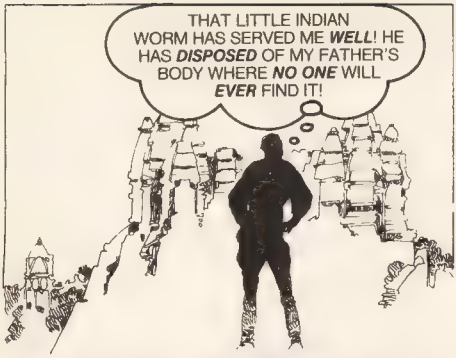

HOW MUCH MUST I PAY FOR SILENCING YOUR TREACHEROUS TONGUE?
FOR A HANDFUL OF PIASTERS, SAHIB, I WILL SUFFER AN ETERNITY OF SILENCE!


HAHA! YOU AND I ARE VERY MUCH ALIKE, MY FRIEND! WE UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER! WE WILL HAVE NO PROBLEMS!

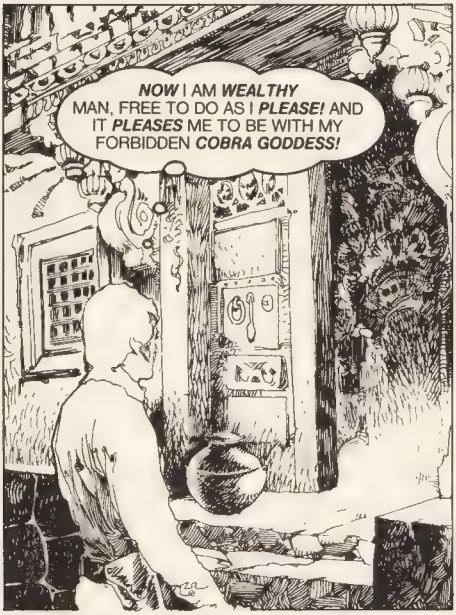
WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHY I KILLED MY FATHER...WHY HE HAD TO DIE?
APART FROM OTHER, MORE DELICATE REASONS, IT WAS BECAUSE OF THIS MONEY! THE OLD FOOL THOUGHT HE COULD DEPRIVE ME OF HIS WEALTH!
OH, SAHIB! THE MAN WAS TRULY A DEVIL! YOU WERE WISE TO KILL HIM, OF COURSE!

A PART OF THIS COULD BE YOURS...IF YOU FORGET WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN HERE TONIGHT!


BUT IF YOU TRY TO BETRAY ME, OH HUMBLE GUST OF WIND, YOU WILL FIND NO SAFE HAVEN FROM THE TEMPEST OF MY WRATH!


THAT LITTLE INDIAN WORM HAS SERVED ME ***WELL***! HE HAS ***DISPOSED*** OF MY FATHER'S BODY WHERE ***NO ONE*** WILL ***EVER*** FIND IT!

IF THERE ARE ***QUESTIONS*** ABOUT MY FATHER'S ABSENCE, I CAN SAY THAT HE WAS SUDDENLY SUMMONED TO ***LONDON***... AND ***NONE*** WILL BE THE ***WISER!***


NOW I AM ***WEALTHY*** MAN, FREE TO DO AS I ***PLEASE!*** AND IT ***PLEASES*** ME TO BE WITH MY FORBIDDEN ***COBRA GODDESS!***

WE WILL ***CELEBRATE MY*** LIBERATION WITH THE SAME UNINHIBITED ***LOVE*** WHICH WILL FOREVER ***FREE*** HER FROM HER MORONIC BOND OF ***CELIBACY***!

ENTER, MY LOVE, I HAVE BEEN ***EXPECTING*** YOU!
THE GREAT ***SERPENT GODS*** HAVE ***FORETOLD*** OF YOUR COMING! THEY HAVE PROPHESIED OF THE ***PASSIONS*** WHICH WEIGH HEAVILY UPON YOUR HEART!

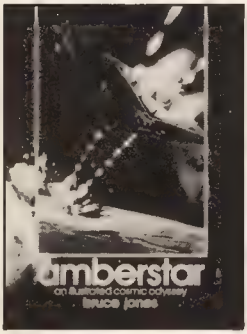
WITHOUT A WORD ROBERT SWEPT THE BEAUTIFUL INDIAN GODDESS INTO HIS ARMS! SHE MADE HIM ***FORGET*** HIS FATHER AND THE GREASY LITTLE INDIAN BEGGAR! SHE MADE ***ALL*** WHICH HAD TRANSPIRED IN THE PAST FEW HOURS SEEM LIKE A ***DREAM!***

SHE ALMOST MADE HIM FORGET HIS ***VOW***...THAT WOMEN ARE TO BE ***USED*** AND THEN CAST ASIDE LIKE ***SPOILED FRUIT!***

N-NO, MY LOVE! I DARE NOT! THE GREAT SERPENT GODS ARE JEALOUS DIETIES!
THOUGH I GIVE MY HEART TO YOU, MY PHYSICAL FORM MUST ALWAYS BELONG TO THEM!
NO! YOU ARE MINE! I WILL SHARE YOU WITH NO ONE!
ROBERT'S ANGRY WORDS ECHOED THROUGHOUT THE FORBIDDEN CHAMBER! SUDDENLY, THERE WAS AN IMMENSE GUTTURAL RUMBLING DEEP WITHIN THE EARTH'S BOWELS! FROM NOWHERE FLAMES SUDDENLY APPEARED, DANCING MYSTICALLY ACROSS THE TEMPLE FLOOR! FROM THE FLAMES EMERGED A POWERFUL, OMINOUS COBRA!
GOOD LORD! WHAT THE DEVIL IS GOING ON HERE?
BEFORE THE MURDER'S DISBELIEVING EYES, A HAIRRAISING SCENARIO WAS ENACTED!
THE GIGANTIC SNAKE SLITHERED ACROSS THE BODY OF THE INDIAN GODDESS, IT'S FORKED TONGUE FLICKING EROTICALLY, SEDUCTIVELY UPON THE WOMAN'S LIPS AS THOUGH CARESSING THEM WITH OBSCENE KISSES!
THEN THE WOMAN AND SERPENT WERE UNITED, ENTWINED WITH FRANTIC, PROFANE LUSTS, VIOLATING THE LAWS OF NATURE AND GODS AS THEY WRITHED IN ECSTASY, MOCKING THE STUNNED OBSERVER WHO WOULD HAVE HAD THE WOMAN FOR HIS OWN...

...THE OBSERVER WHOSE SANITY SEEMED TO WAVER AS HIS OWN JEALOUS RAGE SEETHED!
GET AWAY FROM HER, YOU BASTARD! SHE'S MINE!
OBLIVIOUS TO ALL BUT HIS OWN JEALOUSY, ROBERT DREW HIS WEAPON, AND WITH ITS DEADLY .45 CALIBRE VENOM, DESTROYED THE OBSCENE MONSTROSITY WHO MADE A MOCKERY HIS LOVE!
BANG
YOU'RE MINE, DO YOU HEAR? MINE!
MY LOVE...NOOOO! YOU HAVE ANGERED THE SERPENT GODS! THEY...THEY WILL NEVER LET ME GO! THEY WOULD SOONER DESTROY US BOTH!
EVEN AS THE GIRL SPOKE, A BEVY OF ANGRY SERPENTS SLITHERED FROM THE DARKNESS, THE STENCH OF THEIR BANEFUL PRESENCE STRIKING INTO THE MINDS OF THE DOOMED LOVERS, PARALYZING THEM WITH FEAR AND THE INESCAPABLE REALIZATION OF IMIMPENDING DEATH!
THE GODS WERE ANGRY! YET, THE GODS WERE JUST! THEY ALLOWED THE LOVERS TO SAVOR LIFE FOR A FEW MORE FORBIDDEN HOURS BEFORE THE TOXIC VENOM FROM A THOUSAND STINGS WED THEIR HEARTS IN A MARRIAGE OF ETERNAL DEATH! IT WAS A TERRIBLE, PAINFUL WAY TO DIE! YET, TO THE SERPENT GODS, IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL UNION WHICH HAD BEEN MADE IN HEAVEN!
end

NEW FULL COLOR ART BOOKS!



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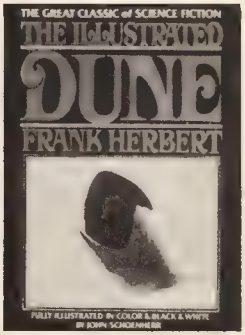

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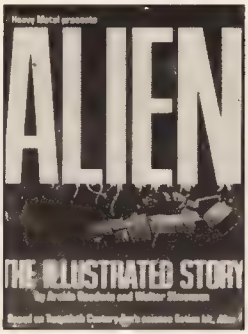

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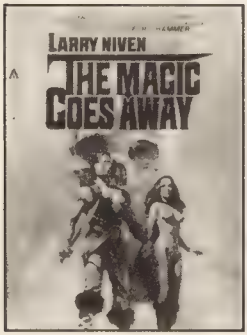

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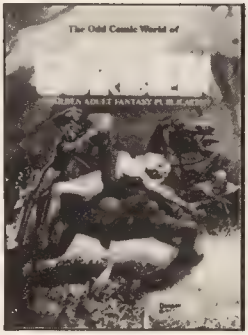

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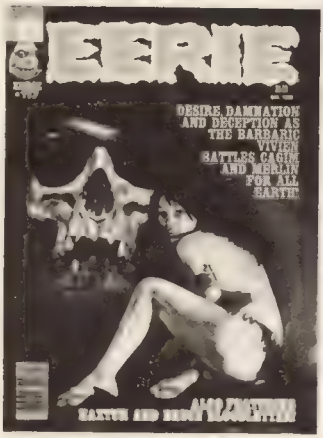

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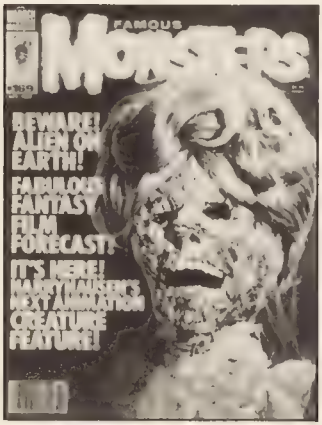

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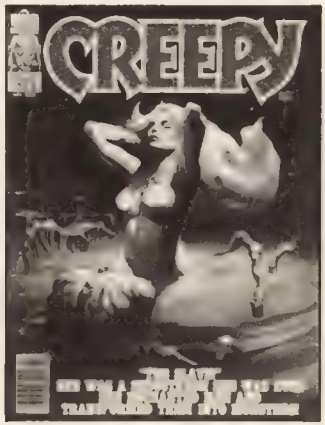

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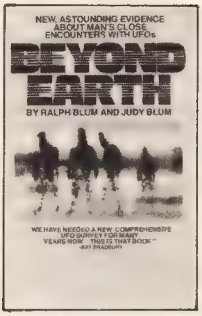

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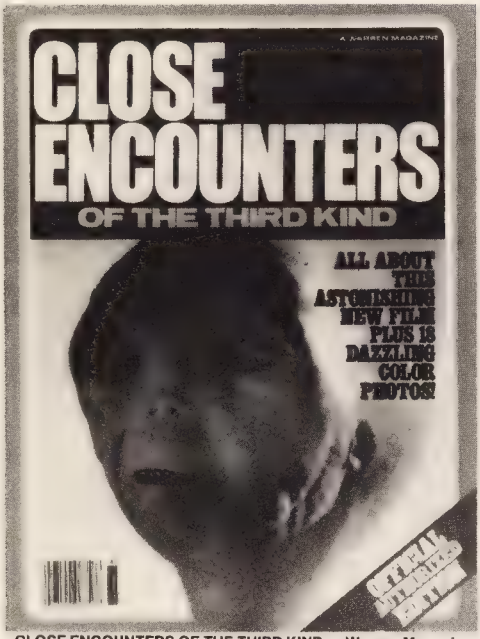

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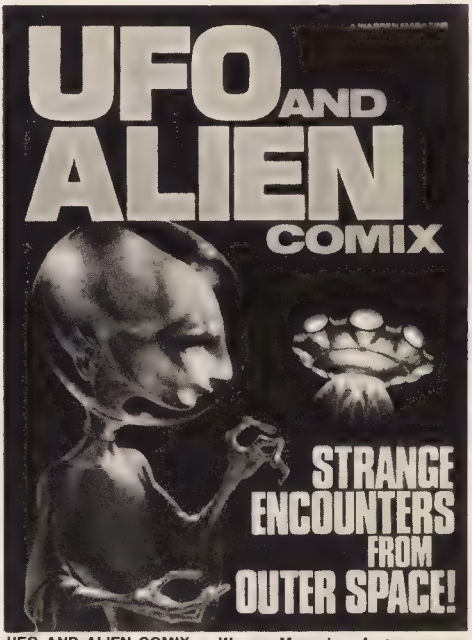

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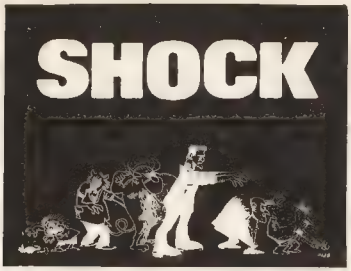

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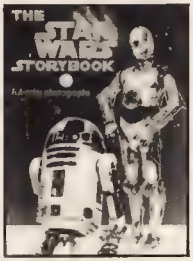

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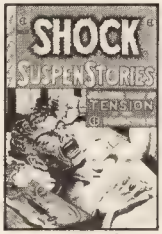

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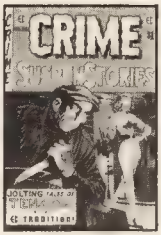

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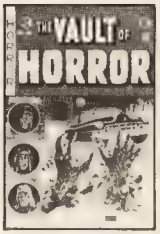

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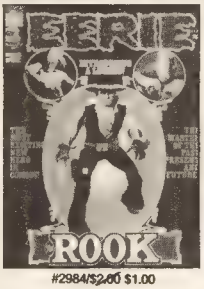

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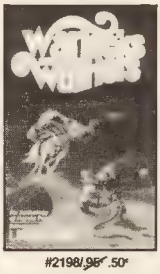
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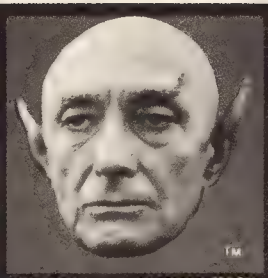

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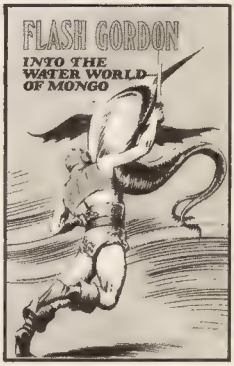

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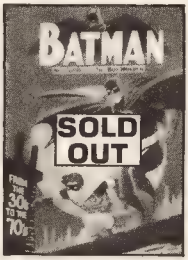

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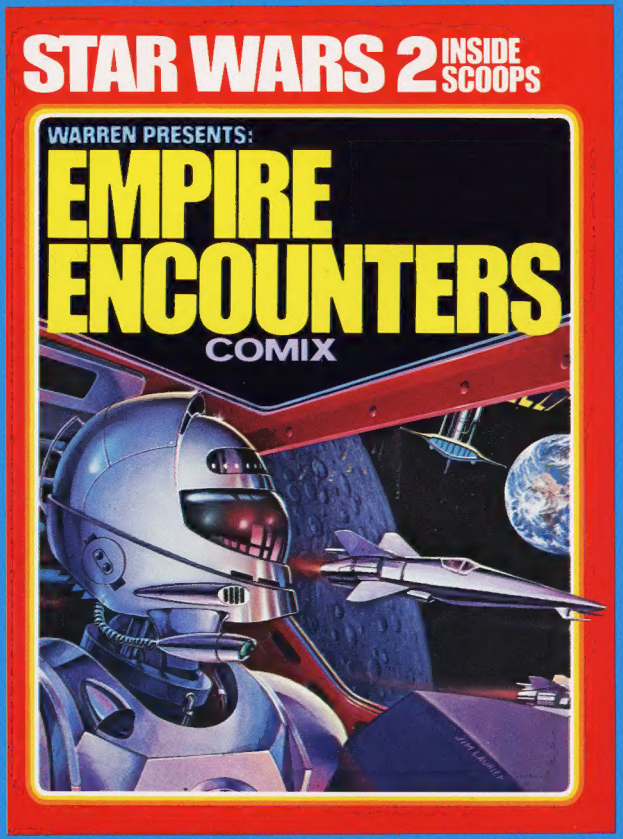

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